A SOVIET WEEKLY OF WORLD AFFAIRS

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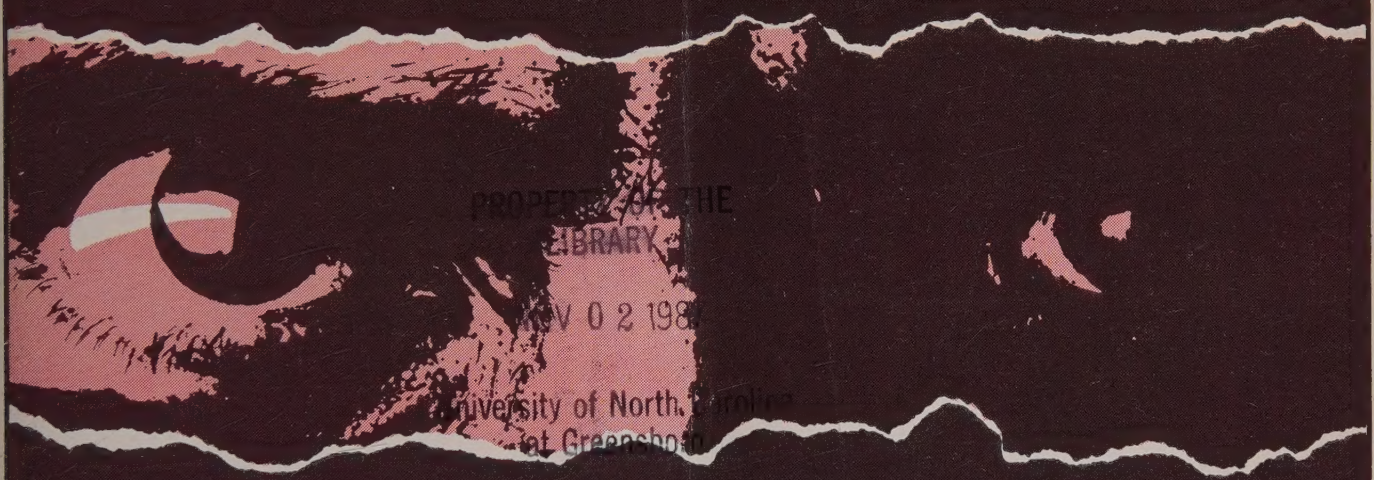

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THE FACE OF TERRORISM

1917–1987

TIME AND PEOPLE

The victory salutes faded in the skies and thousands of demobilized soldiers began to return home. Many of them returned to find that all that remained of their homes was the chimney and black ashes.

Work on the restoration of the areas devastated by the fascists began immediately after their liberation. Seeds and tractors, machine tools and building materials were dispatched. To this day at the steel works in Donetsk one can see the memorial plaque with the inscription "This turbogenerator was made in Leningrad during the blockade."

But the main job began after Victory Day. Demobbed soldiers rolled up their sleeves and got down to work. As in the years of the first five-year plans, the country resembled one big construction site. Villages were rebuilt and in the towns new houses and schools went up. The remains of destroyed military machines were removed from the battlefields and sent to the scrap yard, while the fields themselves were sown. Factories returned to the production of civilian goods.

The Dnieper hydropower station was rebuilt in record time. It was the pride of the country. It had taken the nazis 360 tons of explosives to blow it up. After hundreds and millions of cubic metres of water had been pumped out of the pits, the Donets coalfield began producing coal again.

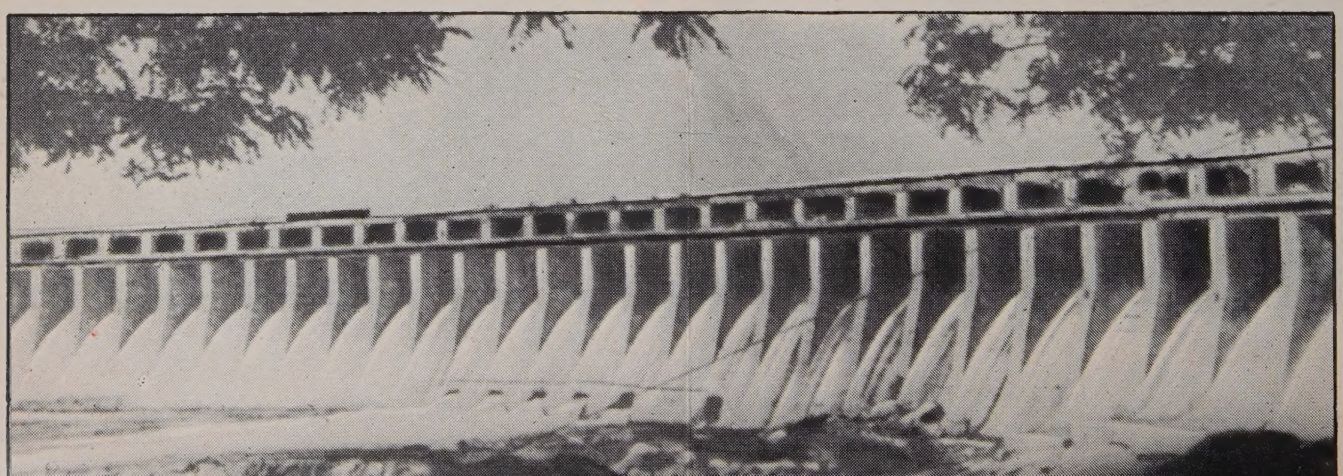
Hitler had once been told by one of his generals that Russia would need a quarter of a century to restore all that had been destroyed. However, by 1949 prewar industrial output had been surpassed.

A 1945 poster calling on demobbed soldiers to work on the building sites.

Reviving Zaporozhe.

Removing the rubble from the ruins of the Dnieper hydropower station. 1944.

The dam after reconstruction. 1946.



A SOVIET WEEKLY
OF WORLD AFFAIRS

NEW TIMES

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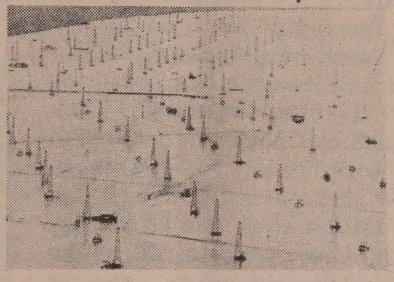

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Cover by Igor Shelk

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3 The 43rd (Extraordinary) CMEA summit in Moscow adopted resolutions on restructuring the mechanism of cooperation which boils down to removing bureaucratic barriers and gearing the mechanism of integration to new conditions and requirements.

NEW TIMES

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FROM OUR MAILBAG

I am a young man and, like all young people, want to live without fear for my future and to see the world flourishing. I want justice to triumph and become a lodestar for those who are seeking to remake the world for the sake of a better future for mankind.

I share the views of the Soviet people because they also want lasting peace, and I read with great interest about the efforts being made by the Soviet Union to avert a new world war. I urge the young people of the world to do everything in their power to prevent a nuclear disaster.

PHAM KHAC TRI
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Though we live in countries with different social systems, we can expand our ties in the field of culture. I therefore think it would be beneficial if you were to send your magazine to the major libraries in our country. To live in peace, we should learn to understand each other, and New Times is a valuable source of information about life in the Soviet Union.

SILVIO SARZI-SARTORI
San Remo, Italy

The new thinking induces us to think in a new way. We too are beginning to wonder why many of us have become apathetic when it comes to participation in community affairs. Who is right, those who work diligently in their respective factories or offices, or those who try to appropriate as much as possible for themselves? Do not the social benefits we enjoy make us inert? I believe we should search together for answers to these questions.

HARALD SORGE
Dessau, G.D.R.

EDITORIAL

A MODEL FOR THE FUTURE

It has become habitual to call Soviet-Finnish ties "an example of good-neighbourly relations" between countries with different socio-economic systems. During the recent visit of President Mauno Koivisto to the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev went even further, saying: "We have been able to build a viable model of good-neighbourliness that can be viewed as a microcosm of a safe and non-violent world."

How did this model develop?

The overcoming of past difficulties is a factor of paramount importance in this respect. The decree granting independence to Finland, signed by Lenin in December 1917, paved the way for good-neighbourliness. But relations between the two countries did not develop smoothly. They fought against each other in the second world war. All the more important and valuable, then, is the level of cooperation and trust they have achieved on the basis of the treaty of 1948.

The search for ways and means of cooperation is another component of the model.

The Soviet Union and Finland are trailblazers in many vital fields which have influenced the shaping of the entire mechanism of East-West relations. They were the first to conclude long-term trade agreements, later to become programmes of economic cooperation up to the year 2000. They were the first to organize coproduction and specialization. They were the first to establish joint ventures.

It would be naive to believe that all is plain sailing in the Soviet-Finnish relations. Take, for instance, the imbalance in trade caused by the sharp decline in world market prices for oil and other raw materials vital to Soviet exports. Some sceptics have doubted whether this imbalance could be overcome even if the Finns immediately started buying Soviet-made Lada cars.

But when the partners are determined to maintain trade at the highest possible level, take each other's needs into account, and meet each other's wishes half way, these problems can be solved.

An understanding of mutual security interests is absolutely essential. At the talks in Moscow the Soviet and Finnish leaders were unanimous in their view that the policies of the two countries should be free of anything that could jeopardize these interests.

A fine example of such an approach is the idea of declaring Northern Europe a nuclear-free zone advanced by the late President Urho Kekkonen. The Soviet Union has by its repeated concrete measures proved itself ready to make this idea a reality.

Not long ago Mauno Koivisto voiced his concern over the aggravation of the situation in the northern region and called for restrictions on naval activity in the adjoining seas. Speaking in Murmansk on the eve of Mauno Koivisto's arrival in the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev backed the Finnish President's initiative and urged consultations between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO states on a wide range of military and political problems of the North.

The whole atmosphere of the Moscow talks has once again confirmed that the Soviet Union takes a broad view of its ties with Finland, with due regard for their special importance for the two nations and the continent as a whole. It is standard practice in civilized relations between states not to act in a way that could prove detrimental to a neighbour.

NEW MECHANISM OF COOPERATION

In the New Times interview which follows Alexei Antonov, Deputy Chairman of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers, comments on the results of the recent CMEA session.

Could you explain what made it necessary to hold a special meeting of the Council?

The need to deal with the problems which had arisen in the sphere of cooperation between the fraternal countries.

Experience has confirmed the correctness of our policy aimed at developing socialist economic integration, and, on the whole, we have achieved fruitful results. Incidentally, this was noted at the session. The practical experience accumulated by our countries over almost four decades is an important gain for world socialism.

Latterly, however, the CMEA countries had come up against certain problems which impeded their further economic growth and the progress of cooperation among them. Symptoms of stagnation appeared. The extensive growth potential had been exhausted. The inter-branch division of labour - a process which had gained considerable momentum in the past - ceased to stimulate a continuous advance of socialist integration.

We sought to rectify the situation. The top level economic conference (1984) determined the overall strategy of cooperation between the CMEA countries for the long term on the basis of the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress for the period of up to the year 2000. But when we got down to implementing it, it became clear that the tasks set could not be accomplished without a radical restructuring of the integration mechanism. It was evident that the forms and methods of cooperation that existed increasingly failed to correspond to the changes taking place in the economic mechanisms of our countries.

About a year ago, at the working meeting in Moscow of the leaders of the fraternal parties of the socialist countries, it was decided substantially to renovate the methods of economic cooperation between the CMEA countries. Their governments were requested to draw up concrete proposals as to what should be done....

Yes. The session was a real turning-point. It gave a thorough analysis to the present state of cooperation among the CMEA countries, and outlined fundamental measures to deepen socialist integration. The task now is resolutely to change over from predominantly trade links to profound cooperation in the sphere of material production based on intra-industry joint manufacturing projects.

The drafts of the documents were drawn up jointly. Ministries, departments and scientific-research institutes were involved as well as individual specialists and prominent scientists from all the CMEA countries. The interest of each country separately and the community as a whole were taken into account.

Then, in the autumn of this year, Central Committee Secretaries of the fraternal parties (at a conference in Sofia) exchanged views on the restructuring of the CMEA integration mechanism. The conclusion they came to was that the documents drawn up by CMEA should be regarded as the starting point for the restructuring.

How would you sum up the essence of the restructuring of the mechanism of cooperation mapped out in the decisions of the recent session?

Briefly its purpose can be summed up as follows: to remove bureaucratic barriers and bring the mechanism of integration closer to the new conditions and requirements, which are of primary significance for the intensification of social production and for improving the welfare of the people. The session noted that a phased restructuring of the mechanism of multilateral cooperation and the work of CMEA was necessary, with due regard for the national economic mechanisms of the member countries, as well as for the measures they are taking to improve their economic performance.

Personally I would single out three main facrtors:

First. Bringing economic levers into greater play, and creating the conditions for actively involving the economic organizations of the fraternal countries in cooperation on the basis of cost-accounting and full responsibility. What we have in mind is the development of direct links and the setting up of mixed enterprises, international associations and organizations. This policy is prompted by the logic of the development of the national economic mechanisms, and the need to democratize the entire system of cooperation and get the broad masses of the working people interested in it.

Second. Coordinating national economic policies of the CMEA countries through a collective concept of the international socialist division of labour for the period 1991-2005. This would include changes in the existing plan coordination procedure. That is the only way we can lay a firm groundwork upon which to improve the structure of national economies of the member countries with an eye to the requirements of specialization and the scientific and technological revolution, and to ensure the implementation of the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress directly in the sphere of material production. And that would mean ensuring the growth of our mutual trade.

And finally. A radical improvement in the system of collective management of the integration process, i.e., the restructuring of the activities and the pattern of CMEA.

It was agreed at the CMEA session that economic, scientific and technical cooperation between the member countries and the coordination of their plans for the coming five-year period would now be conducted at three interconnected levels. What specifically does that envisage?

An entirely new feature is the direct participation in cooperation of the **basic economic unit** - associations, factories and organizations, which can now promote production and scientific-technical cooperation on a contract basis with the wide use of direct links and set up joint enterprises, international associations, scientific-research organizations. To make this possible the member countries have been advised to provide the necessary economic, organizational and legal conditions.

The questions that will be decided at the level of the **separate branches of the economy** include the investment and technical policy of the countries in respect of projects of mutual interest, and programmes of specialization and cooperation in the technical modernization of production, as well as the range of goods and volumes of mutual deliveries of goods manufactured under specialized and joint production contracts.

At **intergovernment level** we shall regularly coordinate economic and scien-

tific-technical policies in various spheres of cooperation, with the interested countries doing the same in other spheres of social and economic development, draw up large-scale programmes and agreements requiring inter-state efforts for their implementation, and lay down planning, commodity-money and legal principles of our cooperation.

You mentioned a collective concept of the international socialist division of labour. What new features will it introduce to the cooperation between CMEA countries as compared with the Comprehensive Programme for Socialist Economic Integration adopted in 1971?

These two highly important documents obviously have a great deal in common in principle. Both cover three five-year periods, and both have the common aim of developing socialist economic integration.

But there are differences as well. The Comprehensive Programme for Socialist Economic Integration defined the strategy of cooperation at a time when the reserves of extensive growth in the CMEA countries had not yet been exhausted. The concept of an internatiolnal socialist division of labour can be seen as a continuation of the Comprehensive Programme, but at a new stage in our development - the stage of an all-round intensification of social production and scientific-technological progress requiring the restructuring of foreign economic links. It will serve as the basis for coordinating the CMEA countries' economic policy primarily in spheres of mutual interest. When drawing up this concept we shall also take into consideration the need for active participation by the fraternal countries in the world division of labour.

Cooperation at the new stage means first and foremost the participation of specific enterprises and associations in it. But possibilities are open to them at a time when the mechanism of economic cooperation between the fraternal countries is undergoing changes, and to what an extent are Soviet enterprises prepared for the development of direct ties with their partners in other socialist countries?

Soviet enterprises and associations now become direct participants in the integration processes. That is in complete conformity with the restructuring of the Soviet economy, and the greater economic independence given to enterprises in the Soviet Union and in other countries of the socialist community.

The advance from trade ties to production cooperation, and the development of internationlal production and scientific cooperation is unthinkable without the direct involvement of the producers and developers in foreign economic activities, without direct contacts between them. In turn, direct cooperation at the level of factories and associations opens up very great opportunities for boosting production efficiency, the exchange of advanced experience, the joint use of the very latest technical and technological innovations, and for improved quality of output.

The conditions for developing direct cooperation between Soviet factories and factories in the fraternal countries are now being created in the Soviet Union. The director of a Soviet factory now has no fewer rights in the sphere of foreign economic relations than the director of a factory in any other CMEA country. For instance, a Soviet factory involved in direct contacts can sign a contract to supply jointly produced goods, render services, buy and sell samples of goods, instruments, materials, separate machines and equipment, deliver custom-made goods and provide its partner with the necessary materials and specifications for making such goods.

Nor is a factory restricted in its choice of organizational forms of cooperation. Partners can, if they so desire, set up joint groups of scientists and specialists, form inter-factory coordination councils, councils of chief designers, technologists, and so on....

Of course, drawing up the blueprint for a new mechanism is only half the battle won. The new mechanism has to be mastered and made to function properly. That requires a good deal of time, involves the encouragement of grassroots and managerial initiative, and the renunciation of deep-rooted stereotypes. Personnel retraining is also going to be a big job. But the most important thing is to get our countries economically interested in co-production. Consequently, the economic efficiency and scale of new forms of cooperation depend on the degree to which enterprises pay their way.

Directors of enterprises that have set up direct contacts with their counterparts in other countries draw attention to certain shortcomings in the economic mechanism of cooperation. For instance, how will factories decide on the prices of jointly produced goods?

It's true that a number of unresolved economic problems hinder the development of direct links. I mean price formation, above all.

Soviet enterprises have the right to set contract prices for mutual deliveries of jointly produced goods, but so far this causes much controversy. The price should take into account world prices for the ready product, the costs to the sellers and the interests of buyers. This is not easy to achieve, considering the fact that price levels differ from country to country. Nevertheless, the early record of direct cooperation between Soviet and other CMEA countries' enterprises shows that mutually acceptable options are open in this sphere, provided that we do not proceed from profit considerations alone but take into account the overall economic effect ensuing, in particular, from a larger scale of production, a steadier rate of deliveries and a higher product quality standard.

What are the prospects for further use of the convertible ruble?

All the CMEA countries came to the present session firmly convinced that the entire currency-financial mechanism of cooperation needs to be substantially improved. Steps have been taken to develop the monetary functions of the convertible ruble. We should like to see it corresponding more to the requirements of direct links and other new forms of cooperation, so that in future it could be convertible to the freely convertible currencies. Measures have also been planned to improve the work of our two joint banks, International Bank for Economic Cooperation (IBEC) and International Investment Bank (IIB). A number of countries intend to study the problem of founding a third joint bank. Its operations would be wholly devoted to promoting direct links between factories. It could operate on a commercial basis.

Another innovation designed to improve currency financial relations will be the use by some CMEA countries, as an experiment, of their national currencies for payments for goods and services in the framework of direct links. We believe that this will not only provide a new stimulus for developing ties between factories, as the basic economic units, but will also promote the growth of trade between these countries.

Not all questions were resolved at the session. The restructuring of the mechanism of cooperation is in effect only beginning. Along what lines do you see its further development?

There are plenty of reserves.... Some of the more promising lines are already being studied by the International Institute of Economic Problems of the Socialist World System together with more than 100 national institutes of the CMEA countries. So far their work has not reached the stage of practical recommendations.

I think that economists should provide us with clear-cut recommendations on such problems as the gradual creation of conditions for the free movement between CMEA countries of goods, services and other production factors, with the long-term aim of creating a common market. We have to acquire a fuller and deeper understanding of the stages in the restructuring of the mechanism of cooperation, of how to improve the principles and methods of price-formation in our mutual trade, primarily in the context of direct links, and to determine the conditions for setting up a zone of free trade and unifying the CMEA countries' customs procedures.

Of course, these are all questions for the future, but we shall be able to resolve them only if the CMEA countries start working on them straight away.

■

Following the example of Russian brothers

VESELIN KHADZHINIKOLOV,
Member of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

The October Revolution had wide repercussions in Bulgaria. Among the factors conducive to this were geographical proximity, the ethnic kinship of the Bulgarians with the Russians, Ukrainians and Byelorussians, the common roots of their languages and cultures, their common written Slav language, and the liberating mission of Russia, which had routed the troops of the Ottoman Empire in the 1877-78 war.

But the main factor was the close links between the Bulgarian and Russian revolutionary democrats and Marxists, as well as the subsequent tireless efforts of Bulgarian Communists to promote friendship with the Soviet people and bring the two countries close together.

The victory of the October Revolution in Russia was welcomed by the Bulgarian working people with joy, enthusiasm and hope. The Tesnyaks, or Bulgarian Marxists, whose views were very similar to those of the Bolsheviks, stepped up the activity they had begun among the soldieres at the front and the working people after the February revolution in Russia in 1917.

The Tesnyaks and the left wing of the Bulgarian Agrarian People's Union especially welcomed the Decree on Peace. Georgi Kirkov, an associate of Dimitr Blagoyev, said in the National Assembly: "The representatives of the Russian republic have declared that they want to enter into open negotiations, and favour glasnost in everything. That's good. The Council of People's Commissars reports daily on the progress of negotiations. But we in Bulgaria are not receiving any news....At this crucial moment the Bulgarian people must know what is happening there."

I draw the reader's attention to the word "glasnost," which has today entered the political lexicon of other countries. It has its origin in the open diplomacy proclaimed by Lenin.

Veselin Khadzhinikolov is a leading Bulgarian historian. One of his major works, "The October Revolution and Bulgaria: Repercussions and Impact (1917-1944)," was published recently in Sofia.

In September 1918, Bulgarian soldiers rose in arms at Vladaya. The working people in uniform were trying to follow the example of their Russian brothers, and take their country out of the war by means of revolution. Alarmed by the uprising, the ruling circles concluded an armistice with the Entente, while the king abdicated and went to Germany.

The connection between the events in Russia and the uprising in Bulgaria was noted by Lenin who, shortly after the rising began, wrote in the newspaper Pravda: "...at the cost of **national** sacrifices, we preserved such an **international** revolutionary influence that today we have Bulgaria directly imitating us."

In the postwar economic dislocation, under the influence of the "Russian example," the revolutionary movement gathered strength in Bulgaria. Mass demonstrations were held throughout the country in support of the Soviet republic, against the presence in Bulgaria of the routed armies of Denikin and Wrangel, and for the dissolution of their headquarters and the return of soldiers to their homeland, revolutionary Russia. The influence of the parties of the left, especially the Tesnyak party (renamed Communist in 1919) grew stronger.

In these circumstances the bourgeoisie and the monarchy were compelled to allow the Agrarian People's Union to assume power. The union carried out a number of radical reforms which undermined the position of wealthy capitalists in the country. In foreign policy, it was inclined in principle to establish normal trade and even diplomatic relations with the Soviet government.

Unhappy with this policy, officers belonging to fascist organizations staged a coup on June 9, 1923, killing many Communists along with leaders and activists of the union, together with the eminent political leader Alexander Stamboliysky.

The Communist Party set its sights on an armed uprising against the military fascist dictatorship and began to prepare for it. On September 23 the uprising spread to almost all parts of the country. The feat of the fallen heroes left a profound mark in the history of the Bulgarian revolutionary movement. It was a dress rehearsal for the coming victory.

In subsequent years the Communists and their sympathizers worked in conditions of police terror, secretly or semi-legally. Nevertheless, they never lost sight of their cherished goal. In its February 1933 resolution the Central Committee of the party stressed that "the basic task of the party is to prepare the workers and all the exploited thoroughly for the impending decisive battles for the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The Communist Party and its allies carefully studied and popularized the experience of socialist construction in the Soviet Union. Though Bulgaria was still ruled by a reactionary regime, not only underground but also legal Communist and a number of liberal bourgeois newspapers carried articles about the U.S.S.R. Stories, novels and scientific works by Russian and Soviet authors were sold in the Russian Book shop. Works of prominent Soviet writers were translated, and Soviet films shown.

Fyodor Raskolnikov, Soviet ambassador to Bulgaria from 1934 to 1938, maintained close contacts with politicians and cultural workers, thereby helping to establish normal relations between the two countries and expand the influence of the ideas of the October Revolution. Thanks to his wisdom and tact, the excesses of the Stalin personality cult and the repressions of the 1930s failed to spoil the favourable influence of the Soviet Union's achievements.

During the second world war Bulgaria was an ally of the fascist axis. The Bulgarian Communists and other anti-fascists called on the people for an armed struggle. In 1943, combat groups and partisan detachments operating in the country joined forces to form a strong people's liberation insurgent army. The Fatherland Front, organized in the summer of 1942, united the patriotic forces of the country.

The revolution of September 9, 1944 - popular democratic in form and socialist in content - continued the cause of the October Revolution in the specific conditions of Bulgaria. A favourable atmosphere for its victory had been created by the triumphant offensive of the Soviet Army.

In the building of socialism we have always drawn on the experience of the Soviet Union and other fraternal countries, at the same time sharing our experience with them. Today, when a profound restructuring of public life has been started in the socialist world with the aim of revealing the humane essence and advantages of socialism in an ever more convincing way, we are again marching shoulder-to-shoulder with the Soviet Union and other fraternal nations.

Sofia

POLAND

The second stage

● A NATIONAL REFERENDUM IS TO DECIDE UPON PRACTICAL WAYS OF IMPLEMENTING THE REFORM.

The 5th plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, held early this October, discussed ways of transition to the second stage of the economic reform.

The first stage, begun six years ago, has helped Poland achieve its principal objective: to restore the national economy after the crisis of 1980-81. However, many of the country's problems remain unsolved.

The extensive promotion of various forms of self-management at work collectives, and of socialist enterprise in all sectors of the national economy is to be the main feature of the changes along with the restructuring of the government machinery which, as Zbigniew Messner, Chairman of the Council of Ministers, put it, "is to start with the state administrative bodies themselves."

On October 10 the head of the Polish government submitted to the Sejm a package of 15 bills intended to help realize the plans for the restructuring of the administrative machinery. Some ministries, for example, are to be closed down. All the specialized industrial ministries are to be abolished and replaced by a single ministry for industry. Professor Zdzislaw Sadowski, Deputy Chairman of the P.P.R. Council of Ministers, and Chairman of the Committee for Economic Reform, said that over a hundred executive officials - ministers and their deputies, central departmental chiefs and directors of boards - may find themselves temporarily out of work. A special fund is to be formed to see them through a period of retraining. Each of them is to be treated with the utmost consideration as their knowledge and experience must not be allowed to go to waste.

Prices will also be revised as part of the reform, as many goods are sold cheaply because of state subsidies (sometimes fairly substantial), while the prices of other commodities are unjustifiably inflated. The price formation process will assume a truly economic character. Plans to raise prices on prime necessities are to be submitted to the public for nationwide discussion. Rises in the cost of living are to be made up for by special subsidies and benefits and by providing conditions for additional earnings.

The Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party supported the public initiative to hold a national referendum on ways of advancing the second stage of the reform. One of these is the radical restructuring of the entire national economy, which will call for an all-out national effort and concentrated economic leverage if results are to be achieved within two or three years. Another way is to implement the reform gradually, step by step. The choice is to be the nation's.

The Sejm has scheduled the referendum for November 29.

ANDREI PERSHIN

Warsaw

DOES IT PAY TO TRADE MACHINE-GUNS FOR SEWING MACHINES?

The readers of the Manila paper Ang Pahayagang Malaya were flabbergasted at the sensational report front-paged on its August 23 issue to the effect that the government had spotted Soviet submarines off the islands of Mindanao, Luzon and Palawan in the Philippine territorial waters six times (!). The paper referred to an aide of President Corazon Aquino, but did not mention his name.

The abortive coup which followed five days later overshadowed the "stunning" news. But as early as September 4, the Manila Bulletin continued the story about the Red submarines, which had made themselves at home off the shores of an important U.S. strategic ally in the Pacific, describing them as part of a secret Soviet operation supplying arms to the New People's Army forces.

One cannot but note the striking similarity between the above-mentioned "sensation" and the anti-Soviet hysteria into which the Sri Lanka papers erupted this spring. Referring to an article that had appeared in the Wall Street Journal, the Sri Lanka media reported on alleged Soviet arms deliveries to the Tamil rebels, the danger of the Port of Trincomalee being handed over to the Soviets, and Red planes having access to a major aerodrome near Colombo affording the Soviets control over most of the Indian Ocean. It would be in place here to mention the fact that the paper New Zealand Truth had also carried an article, last July, under the intriguing headline "Russians Arm Gangs of Aborigines," saying that fishermen on Soviet trawlers cruising off the New Zealand coast trade machine-guns for sewing machines.

All three propaganda operations are obviously of a pattern. In the Manila version, the sensation was inspired by the American Associated Press which, referring to a "reliable" source in the U.S. embassy in Manila circulated a number of local papers with what it called "trustworthy information" on the Soviets' subversive activities against the Philippines.

The canard proved shorthanded, however. In mid-September, the Philippine Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent a note to the Soviet embassy in Manila saying that these publications by local papers "should not be interpreted as issuing from the Malacanang Palace (the President's residence) as they are neither backed by facts, nor reflect the opinion of the government." In their editorial commentaries, the newspapers admitted they had been unwittingly drawn into a misinformation campaign.

What's behind the current American anti-Soviet propaganda drive in the Asian Pacific region? Is it that U.S. efforts to build up its military presence there are increasingly frowned upon by the governments and the public?

The nations of the Asian Pacific region have approved the Vladivostok programme elaborated by Mikhail Gorbachev in further detail in his interview to the Indonesian paper Merdeka. However, certain Washington politicians probably feel differently about this programme. It looks as if they still regard the shopworn cliché of a "Soviet military threat" as a foolproof means of manipulating public opinion in any part of the world.

MIKHAIL PUTINKOVSKY

KAMPUCHEA

The road to reconciliation

●PNOMPENH HAS MADE CONSTRUCTIVE NEW PROPOSALS FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT OF THE KAMPUCHEAN PROBLEM.

In late August the government of the People's Republic of Kampuchea published a programme of national reconciliation and called on all Kampucheans, irrespective of their past, ideology, politics and religion, to cooperate in the building of an independent, peaceful and non-aligned Kampuchea (see our issue No. 37, 1987). It expressed its readiness to talk with all opposition Khmer groups except Pol Pot and his closest associates.

Pnompenh sincerely desires such a dialogue and would like it to start as early as possible. That is why it received with interest the letter from seven former Khmer political leaders to the leaders of the P.R.K. and the Khmer groups proposing meetings between feuding factions. Pnompenh responded readily to Narodom Sihanouk's statement published on September 18 by his office in Bangkok, in which he agreed to a dialogue between various parties to the Kampuchean conflict.

In the opinion of the Kampuchean government, there are signs of positive developments in the present situation, which may help break the deadlock over a political settlement in Kampuchea and Southeast Asia. Pnompenh's new initiative contained in the government statement of October 8 is intended to contribute towards this end.

Kampuchea has declared that it is ready to meet Prince Narodom Sihanouk and the leaders of other opposition groupings to discuss a just political settlement of the Kampuchean problem. Kampuchea is prepared to offer Sihanouk a high post in the government leadership corresponding to his contribution to the cause of peace, national reconciliation and independence.

The document says that all Vietnamese volunteer forces will be withdrawn from Kampuchea simultaneously with an end to all foreign interference and the use of foreign territories against Kampuchea. This is to be followed by a general election, in the presence of foreign observers, and the formation of a coalition government.

Pnompenh is calling for talks - direct or through intermediaries - to reach an agreement on turning the Kampuchean-Thai border into a border of peace and friendship. The Kampuchean government has made clear its stand on the question of refugees: Kampuchea is prepared to discuss the voluntary and organized repatriation of all Kampuchean refugees in camps in Thailand with international humanitarian organizations and interested parties.

"At last. The Russians are..."
"Coming!"
"...out to scrap chemical weapons for good."

Drawing by Vsevolod Arsenyev

Finally, the Kampuchean government has made an important proposal to convene an international conference of opposing Kampuchean sides, Indo-China and the ASEAN countries, and all the great powers, as well as other states which want the Kampuchean problem settled peacefully.

Clearly, such a representative conference can only be convened if all the sides and states mentioned exhibit good will. Much would depend on the stand taken by China, which could, along with other interested countries, play a constructive role in bringing about a just political settlement of the problems which have been deadlocked for several years.

ALBERT PIN

ASIA

A permanent forum is needed

● "FOR TOO LONG HAVE WE OF ASIA BEEN PETITIONERS IN WESTERN COURTS AND CHANCELLERIES. THAT STORY MUST NOW BELONG TO THE PAST. WE PROPOSE TO STAND ON OUR OWN LEGS AND COOPERATE WITH ALL OTHERS WHO ARE PREPARED TO COOPERATE WITH US."

This energetic statement was made by Jawaharlal Nehru at a conference on inter-Asian relations in Delhi in March 1947. The forum was the first collective attempt by Asian countries to challenge their European suzerains, find ways of establishing cooperation on a continent-wide scale, and work out a formula for good-neighbourly relations.

A second similar conference, held in Delhi from October 2 to 5, brought together about 300 delegates from some 30 countries. In his opening speech, Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi called on the Asian states to put an end to foreign presences (whether military or neocolonialist-economic) and to the use of their territories by outside forces both for military provocations against neighbouring states and for far-reaching strategic purposes. He proposed that the Delhi Declaration on principles for a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world be accepted as a code of relations between Asian countries.

The ideas of the Delhi conference of 1947 are still relevant today. But in the past 40 years the situation in Asia has, of course, changed, both for the better and the worse.

A politically independent Asia has given birth to such doctrines of peaceful coexistence as Panch Shila and ten principles of the Bandung conference. The policy of non-alignment also originated there. The Asian countries proposed declaring the Indian Ocean a zone of peace. In accordance with the Rarotonga Treaty, the South Pacific has been proclaimed a nuclear-free zone. Indonesia has suggested establishing a similar zone in Southeast Asia. At the same time, of the 65 armed conflicts recorded in the world from 1965 to 1982, the majority took place in the Asian-Pacific region.

The name of the Finnish capital was often mentioned at the Delhi conference. Helsinki is associated with progress in the strengthening of security and the expansion of cooperation on a continent-wide scale.

Of course, the Asian-Pacific region has a long way to go to its own Helsinki. Asia does not yet possess a political instrument of intercourse of the type created by the Europeans. However, in its final document the Delhi conference called for such an instrument to be found and for the establishment of a permanent forum that would help draw the continent into a process similar to the Helsinki one.

LEONID ZHEGALOV
our own correspondent
Delhi

OBSERVER'S VIEW

"A LIMITED INCIDENT"

DMITRY ZGERSKY

On the evening of October 8, American helicopters sank one Iranian torpedo boat and put two others out of action.

Iran has denied the claim that the vessels were the first to open fire. Rajaie Khorassani, Iran's permanent representative at the U.N., has declared that the destruction of three Iranian vessels could only be seen as a "declaration of war" on Iran by the U.S.

President Reagan has played down the latest in the series of clashes between the U.S. and Iran, calling it a "limited incident." His cautious comment on an incident that could have triggered off a military confrontation is not accidental. Many in the U.S. Congress now understand that the U.S. has gone too far. There are now about 80 U.S. warships and those of its allies in the Persian Gulf. It is crowded with naval armadas. Dangerous incidents are growing in frequency and magnitude. In the last incident but one the Americans blew up an Iranian vessel. As of today, three vessels have been blown up. What will happen tomorrow?

The British Sunday Telegraph had every reason to sound a note of alarm when it said that the U.S. administration was not only responding to Iran's aggression, as the Defence Department claimed, but seeking a confrontation, and that the U.S. attack on the Iranian ship and Thursday's attack on Iranian military vessels sought to provoke an Iranian retaliation which would in turn lead to a massive American retaliation, possibly on Iranian territory.

Fearing such a turn of events, many U.S. Congressmen want to invoke the military powers bill, which would enable Congress to force the administration to withdraw the U.S. naval units from the Persian Gulf. This explains why President Reagan gave such a modest assessment of another U.S. naval victory. The President is on the war path and is afraid of interference by Congress.

Another aspect that has been largely overlooked is the Mediterranean factor. While the world had its eyes trained on the Persian Gulf, the Bright Star-87 military manoeuvres were held in the Mediterranean and on Egyptian territory last August. These are the fourth such exercises in seven years. Coming at this tense moment, they involved 9,000 Americans from Rapid Deployment Force and U.S. warships and planes. An air and sea landing was practised. Because Egypt is not at present threatened from outside, the conclusion suggests itself that the exercises were held to train American soldiers for a possible landing in the Persian Gulf.

It was announced in early October that NATO would start its Deterrent Force-87 manoeuvres in the Mediterranean on October 14. The Middle East region is caught in the pincers of the military activities of the United States and its allies. Moreover, it looks as if they are poised to launch a large-scale war against Iran. The U.S. has often claimed lately that its aim is to force Iran to comply with the U.N. resolution on a cease-fire in the Persian Gulf. But who gave Washington such powers? Clearly, settlement of the Gulf conflict is a prerogative of the United Nations. It alone can act as a mediating force between the belligerents. ■

The missile game

Some Western politicians are alarmed by the prospective Soviet-American agreement on medium- and shorter-range missiles.

VYACHESLAV BOIKOV

In politics, as in chess, moves are thought out in advance. Take the problem of the elimination of medium- and shorter-range missiles. Despite the two sides' agreement in principle, the problem has not yet been resolved. The draft of the agreement is being drawn up. The Moscow meeting between U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz and his Soviet counterpart Eduard Shevardnadze planned for October 22-23 is in the preparatory stage. NATO circles, however, are already busily discussing the likely course of events following the "double zero" and what the next move should be.

From high to low spirits

Public opinion polls have shown that the overwhelming majority of West Europeans welcome the accord reached between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. in mid-September on medium- and shorter-range missiles, and want to see such an agreement signed.

Political leaders have also come out in favour of the Soviet-American accord. France, said President Mitterrand, supports such an agreement on the reduction of weapons as it does not upset the principle of global parity and can be verified. Britain's Foreign Secretary, Sir Geoffrey Howe, noted that the conclusion of a treaty on medium- and shorter-range missiles would increase trust in East-West relations by reducing the possibility of a conflict. Chancellor Kohl of the F.R.G. takes the view that such a treaty would pave the way for further steps on disarmament and arms control. Support also came from the Belgian Prime Minister, Wilfried Martens, and the head of the Netherlands government, Rudolph Lubbers. The Soviet-American accord was also officially welcomed at the NATO headquarters in Brussels.

However, the generally high tone of the applause was very soon replaced by much more subdued tones. As the supreme commander of the NATO forces in Europe, General Galvin, put it, the progress in working out intermediate nuclear force (INF) agreement was by no means long-awaited and happy news. He believes that as a result of the elimination of these weapons the threat of an armed conflict between East and West becomes greater. The American general's view was echoed by the French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac. "I should not like us to be under the illusion," he said, "that an important step forward has been made in the question of security." Similar assessments are to be found fairly often in the Western press.

Hearing and reading such statements, one involuntarily recalls the ironic comment of the former director of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Paul Warnke. He once remarked that if the Soviet Union decided to disarm unilaterally, the hawks would still regard such a step as being to the West's disadvantage.

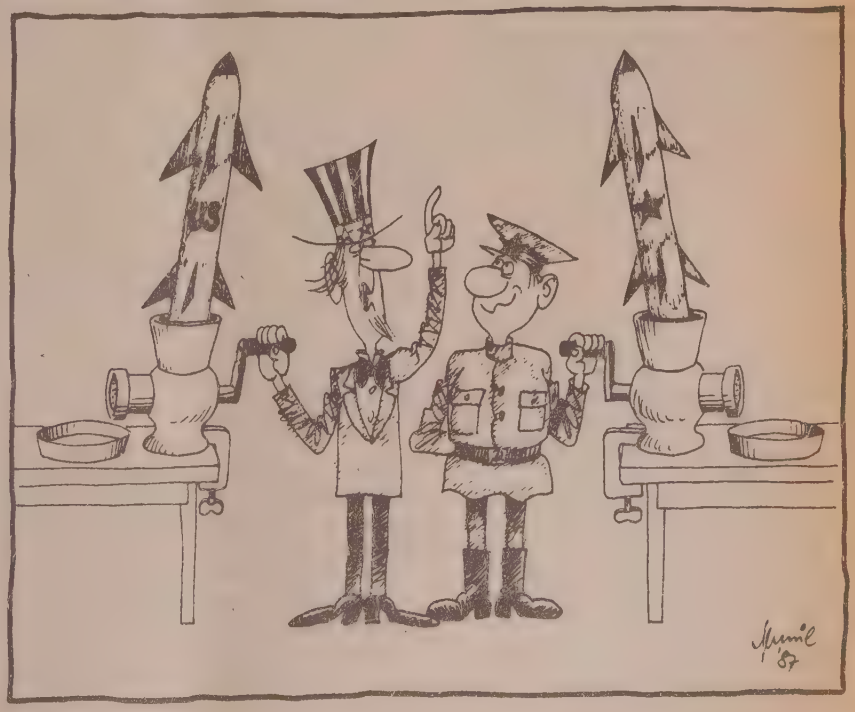
What are they afraid of?

The magazine Newsweek wrote: "In public, allied leaders have no choice but to applaud the imminent conclusion of a 'double zero' pact.... Their voters overwhelmingly favour an agreement. But privately, the politicians and generals responsible for Western Europe's security are scared...." What do they fear?

First of all, they fear that the withdrawal of American Euromissiles could mean a decoupling of the Old World from the New. Western Europe might lose its American nuclear shield and the U.S. might not come to its aid in the case of an attack from the "Reds."

The argument that Western Europe would remain defenceless seems unfounded even to such a well-known propagandist of the Soviet menace as Richard Perle, until recently U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defence. He was quoted in the French magazine L'Express as saying that actually even after American medium-range missiles are eliminated NATO would still have in Europe another 4,000 nuclear warheads,

Drawing from Frankfurter Rundschau (F.R.G.)



most of them deployed on long-range aircraft. Perle, however, ignores British and French nuclear forces, or the nuclear potential of American warships and submarines cruising in European waters. But even without these substantial supplements, the Old World is far from resembling the emperor with no clothes.

And here are the views of NATO Secretary-General Lord Carrington: "The tangible manifestation of the American commitment to the defence of Europe is not the in-theatre missiles, but the presence of 326,000 American troops and their dependents." Their return home is not even being negotiated.

The second thing that is giving rise to concern is the alleged "overwhelming supremacy" of the Soviet Union and its allies in conventional weapons, the significance of which, NATO believes, will increase considerably after the withdrawal of American Euromissiles. According to NATO estimates, the preponderance of the Warsaw Pact's conventional armaments over its own could be in the ratio of 3 to 1. And if the Russians succeed in stripping Europe of nuclear weapons, claims General Galvin, this would mean the possibility of a surprise attack and the conquest of the West.

The U.S. Secretary of State is presumably no less well informed than some NATO leaders about the balance of forces. Yet shortly after the Reykjavik meeting he said that he did not believe that in a nuclear-free world NATO would be surpassed in conventional forces. Nor does another top expert in that field - John R. Dean, who from 1978 to 1981 led the American delegation to the Vienna talks on the reduction of armed forces and armaments in Central Europe. According to him, Soviet superiority is a myth that the mass media accept unconditionally without even questioning it or studying its origins.

Balance: At what level?

The Belgian Group for Research and Information on Peace which is regarded as an independent research centre, has made a thorough study of the East-West balance of forces. When I met the leader of the group Bernard Adam, I asked him to sum up the results of their studies.

"The armed forces of the two sides - both nuclear and conventional," he told me, "are asymmetrical. In some components the East is stronger, in others, the West. But these imbalances, when taken together, are equalized."

Why then, do NATO experts tend to speak of Soviet military superiority in conventional armaments?

"Such conclusions are usually founded on stressing the strong points of the opponent and playing down their own advantages. The fact that the Warsaw Treaty Organization has, for example, more tanks or artillery pieces, is not proof of an imbalance in conventional forces. NATO, for example, has 2.3 times more anti-tank weapons, and its combined navy is stronger. Thus the Western advantage in aircraft carriers stands in a ratio of 5 to 1, in frigates, 4 to 1, and destroyers, 2.5 to 1."

But figures alone don't provide a complete picture. In assessing the balance you have to consider, in addition to numbers, the qualitative aspect....

Of course. According to our data, for instance, 60 per cent of the Warsaw Treaty tanks were made in the fifties and sixties. NATO has more tanks produced in the seventies and eighties. You also get an imbalance when you forget to put on the Western side of the scales France's military potential or, say, the U.S. military hardware stored in Europe. If, I repeat, you take all the components into account, then the military potentials of the East and West are approximately equal."

If NATO fears the might of Soviet conventional forces, then it is hard to understand why the West has for almost 18 months been unable to formulate its stand on the proposal of the Warsaw Treaty countries to cut back on all armed forces and armaments from the Atlantic to the Urals advanced in Budapest in 1986.

"That is a question many West Europeans are asking today. The Warsaw Treaty initiative you mentioned was subsequently supplemented by what I see as the important proposal made by Mr Gorbachev to discuss and remove the disproportions and imbalances in the various categories of weapons that arouse the concern of the other side. In other words, the Soviet Union suggested resolving controversial issues by cutting the weapons possessed by either side in excess of the other. Atlantic strategists and politicians also profess the desire to ensure their security with a minimum of weapons. However, in practice time and again they bring up the question of topping up their armaments."

Explosive compensations

Although not a single Euromissile has been eliminated, NATO leaders have for several months been discussing plans for a military compensation for such a move. General Galvin declared that he wanted "to strengthen both the conventional capability of NATO and to some extent the nuclear capability." First and foremost, this presupposes adding to NATO's arsenal new tactical nuclear missiles of the Lance type, and then the modernization of the nuclear artillery and airborne bombs and missiles.

There are proposals to fill the Eurostrategic "gap" with American sea- and bomber-based cruise missiles. Lately, it is true, there has been less talk about them, so as not to draw public attention to such ideas. Nevertheless the Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Assembly Peter Corterier spoke fairly frankly of these plans in an interview to The International Herald Tribune:

"Perhaps NATO could quietly restore some nuclear options, for example, by putting some extra cruise missiles on submarines under the orders of the NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe. Since this change is low profile, it might not be too sensitive politically."

And U.S. General John Chain, who heads the American Strategic Air Command, recently put forward a new idea for compensating for the Euromissiles. He suggested adjusting 150 B-52 bombers to carry cruise missiles equipped with non-nuclear warheads, these warheads being capable of doing the same jobs as nuclear Pershing or Tomahawk missiles. Supporters of this plan point out that the B-52 bombers can fly more than 10,000 km. without refuelling. Nor would they require permanent European bases, the granting of which could spark off a public explosion of indignation in the Old World.

As the prospects for an INF agreement become increasingly apparent, demands for regional compensation and strengthening the European component of NATO ring out increasingly loudly in Western Europe. And words are gradually translated into actions. Paris and Bonn are already discussing the possibility of setting up a joint defence council to coordinate efforts to develop new weapons and form joint military units. London and Paris are also attempting to coordinate their nuclear policies.

You don't have to be a military expert to realize the dangers inherent in such plans. Do they really correspond to Europe's interests? Many people are expressing their doubts about the correctness of such a policy. The London Observer, for instance, has remarked that there hardly seems to be any sense in concluding an agreement restricting one type of weapon if, as a result, they are replaced with another; it would be much better for Europe to acknowledge that the time has come to reduce the level of military confrontation....

A good piece of advice. The important thing in politics, like in chess, is not to run out of time.

Brussels

THE KREFELD SEISMOGRAPH

Notes taken at an anti-war forum

The drum of the seismograph revolved slowly, the stylus tracing a thin, almost straight line. Each of us visiting the Central Seismological Observatory at Gräfenberg wanted to take a look at it. Dr Helmut Aichele, who was receiving us, motioned us away.

That is a very old U.S.-made instrument, he said smiling, we use far more sophisticated digital techniques now. They are capable of taking 20 measurements a second and there is virtually no lower sensitivity limit. No underground explosion can remain undetected by that method and it looks as though the politicians will have to forget about the long and pointless debate about verification once and for all....

When did you last detect an underground nuclear explosion?

Let me look at the record. Here it is: September 24, 15:00 hours, the Nevada test site....

And so one of the sessions at the 6th Krefeld Initiative Forum got under way early in October in the city of Nuremberg. Gräfenberg is half an hour's drive from Nuremberg, and Dr Aichele, an active member of the anti-missile movement, had kindly invited participants in the forum to go there for a debate on the issue of banning nuclear tests.

But let us first consider the forum itself, an important event in the public life of the F.R.G. and one that has now become traditional.

Seven years ago, in November 1980, eight prominent public figures of the F.R.G. signed the Krefeld Appeal which was later to gain wide renown. They held widely different political views, but all of them were united in their desire to prevent the deployment in the country of U.S. Pershing and cruise missiles. Five million people eventually signed that appeal several months later and the collection of signatures on it became a spontaneous political campaign of an unprecedented momentum.

At the time the government paid no heed to the voice of the people, but the Krefeld Appeal was not launched in vain. An anti-missile movement that emerged as signatures were collected on it became part of public life in the country. The initiators of the appeal went on to make statements on crucial problems and elect their supporters to Krefeld Initiative forums where various issues were discussed.

The 6th forum discussed ways of abandoning political thinking in terms of military blocs, getting rid of the "faces of the enemy," and eliminating nuclear weapons by the year 2000. The Nuremberg trade unions played host to the forum in a move that clearly indicates closer ties between the anti-war and trade union movements.

The session lasted two days and was quite unlike any ordinary convention. There were lots of children outside the Trade Union House in Nuremberg, as many delegates had come for the weekend with their families. Instead of a long opening address, there were several brief speeches. Then the floor was given to representatives of the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A., as the forthcoming Soviet-American agreement is in the focus of the attention of the anti-war movement. I had the honour to address the forum on behalf of the Soviet Peace Committee. My opposite number, former U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark, addressed the gathering from a TV screen. Besides, he sent in a sound recording of his statement.

The debates began in an unusual way. There were three people on the stage, Social Democratic member of the Bavarian Landtag Gerda-Maria Haas, Petra K. Kelly, who sits in the Bundestag for the Greens, and the Deputy Chairman of the German Communist Party, Ellen Weber. Having made brief opening statements to assess the current situation and the goals of the anti-war movement, they began to discuss them in a very uncompromising way. The audience was free to contribute to the discussion.

The same procedure of conducting discussions from the stage, widely used in the F.R.G., was employed at other sessions of the forum as well. Dr Erich Hahn, a member of the G.D.R. Peace Council, and the prominent Social Democratic theorist Dr Johano Strasser continued the debate on the contribution of the two German states to the cause of disarmament and the relations between them. On the second day the discussion was continued by unlikely guests at the forum: NATO and Warsaw Treaty generals working for peace. Seven generals from the F.R.G., Greece, Britain, Holland, Italy, and the U.S.S.R. exchanged views and answered questions. Our country was represented by General V. Petrenko.

There also were discussions in 15 working groups, where lively exchanges of opinion took place. No resolutions were adopted and everyone contributed to the discussion as they saw fit. On the eve of the forum participants and guests had visited 20 local anti-war organizations and held detailed discussions. There was also a cultural programme given by a drama group who presented their own rather witty sketches of what they called the "Scenario for the future of Europe."

There is a lot to be learnt from the organizers of the Krefeld Forum. It is high time we abandoned our customary tedious procedures and obsolete rituals for holding rallies. The cause of working for peace, important though it is, is not incompatible with lively forms of discussion.

The turning point

In his opening address to the forum the well-known writer Dieter Lattmann observed that the anti-war movement in the West and the peace initiatives of the East are characterized in the autumn of 1987 by a mixture of high hopes and a measure of scepticism. For the first time in history, he explained, the two leading nuclear powers have decided to eliminate part of their deadly arsenals, while not a single missile has yet been scrapped.

That mixture of hope and scepticism was felt in all statements at the forum, and it

was perhaps scepticism that tended to prevail. One explanation of this is the circumstances in which the anti-war movement has to function, faced with a heavy propaganda barrage from the media.

All that is near and dear to every heart is distorted and turned against the movement. Hardly had reports come from Washington about the agreement between Eduard Shevardnadze and George Shultz than there appeared in the media a new series of malicious claims. One of them goes something like this: you see, dear campaigners against the missiles, the superpowers can decide everything without you. They had no wish to come to terms and your demonstrations did not help, but when they decided to strike a deal they did so....

There was no support for that view in Nuremberg. The forum discussed quite the opposite proposition: that there could have been no Washington agreement without the anti-war movement. In spite of all my aversion to the term "superpower" I made a point of saying in my address that at the signing of the Washington agreement a true superpower - the world anti-war movement - had been an invisible presence.

Dr Peter Starlinger, an eminent scientist, said that no one can deprive the movement of its right to celebrate victory. "As soon as the agreement is signed," he said, "we will have a celebration, but the very next day we will get together again to deal with new and more important problems."

Dr Starlinger was no doubt referring to another claim by right-wing propaganda to the effect that the anti-war movement has all but fizzled out, as compared with the early 1980s, and that after the Soviet-American accord no one will have any use for it.

The forum in Nuremberg put paid to that as well. As one of the speakers said, "alas, we have not been made redundant." There were calls for more vigilance on the part of the movement, as there are many who oppose the agreement. The fighters for peace must continue to bring pressure to bear on the West German government, urging it to abandon its position in the wake of militarist policies.

The most heated debates at Nuremberg concerned the F.R.G.'s domestic problems. Like a sensitive seismograph the anti-war movement records dangerous moves by militarist circles. It was often observed at the forum that fresh military efforts are being made to offset the steps toward disarmament. The forum was reminded, for example, of the dangerous development of Franco-German military cooperation, the growth of military spending, the attempts to drag the F.R.G. into regional conflicts, and the renewed aggressive trends in the F.R.G.'s military leadership.

New thinking in action

The anti-war movement's "seismographic" function has given it another important dimension, as the movement has become just as sensitive to positive developments, the positive initiatives of the socialist countries and our peace proposals.

I had very clear evidence of this. Participants in the forum met with various local anti-war groups and as soon as our small delegation arrived in Nuremberg were invited to the small community of Rosstal where, to my surprise, I was met by about fifty people who did not let me off the hook for at least three hours. They were very well informed and wanted to know more about the new way of thinking and the new Soviet initiatives, and they told me about the hopes they pin on this country.

In 1983 an anti-war group formed in Rosstal sent a letter to Moscow. They even found a translator. The letter ended with an appeal to end the arms race, abandon the medium-range missiles that threatened their lives, find an appropriate formula for doing so in Geneva, and make a first step towards mutual trust between the great powers.

They told me that they understood that they had sent their letter to very busy people, but they were still hoping for a reply.

I could only console them by saying that now, four years later, the appeal is becoming a reality, but I fear my friends there are still somewhat offended. The anti-war movement is very active in this godforsaken small community. They publish a newspaper and the township has been proclaimed a nuclear-free zone.

Great attention is paid to statements from Moscow, although even now the West German media do not give much space to Soviet initiatives.

Speaking in Nuremberg, Petra Kelly called on the anti-war movement to declare for all the world to hear that the progress made so far is due to the new way of thinking shown by the Soviet Union and not to power politics, Mr Reagan's threats, or the idea of deterrence.

Only recently such views were not common in the anti-war movement, but they did not give rise in me to any sense of complacency. Rather I felt the exceptional responsibility they place on the Soviet peace movement. Every effort must be made to make the new ideas available to as many people as possible and destroy the notorious "enemy image." That is no easy task, and it was discussed at length in Nuremberg.

The Nuremberg forum is over, but the delicate seismograph that once recorded the birth of the Krefeld Appeal continues to take the pulse of the planet.

LEV BEZYMENSKY
New Times political analyst
Nuremberg - Moscow

I am grateful for the invitation by the New Times editors to bring to a new audience some of the themes from the West European debate on security.

The momentum of military confrontation throughout the 1970s was one of the factors which ended détente and ushered in the new cold war. Improvements in East-West relations, however real, are precarious as long as that basic confrontation persists. Similarly, while arms control agreements are to become major achievements, their effect will be limited if the cold-war atmosphere remains.

It is necessary to change the core of military policies. The debate has produced concepts which challenge the orthodoxal system of armed forces.

Rethinking the security concept

We have to begin by rethinking the concept of security itself. It should embrace not only defence against potential military threats, but also problems of the economy, environment, energy and other issues. Even if the focus is narrowed to relations between states, the equation of security with military strength is dangerously misleading.

One ought not ignore the fact that armed forces sustain and exacerbate the insecurity which justifies their existence. What each side presents as a step to strengthen its own defences is read by the other as a threat which calls for a response in kind. To the first side this appears as a threat justifying yet more weapons programmes - and so on in a vicious and dangerous circle.

In strategic affairs, perception creates its own reality. Theorists of nuclear deterrence have long recognized the importance of perception. Indeed, their approach is based on manipulating the other side's perceptions by means of terror to induce caution. Yet the chosen means - the nuclear threat - creates enormous risks, for there are no circumstances in which the response to terror can be predicted with any degree of certainty.

This terror, mutual suspicion, hostility and expanding military production did not only undermine the détente of the 1970s, but also created an atmosphere which could hardly be conducive to clear calculation. At times of political crises the system of security by confrontation risks being highly unstable.

Against this system the Palme Commission proposed the concept of common security. Its guiding idea is the simple recognition that, for all the armaments the United States, the Soviet Union and their respective allies have piled up since 1945, none is safer and all face greater risks than when the process began. This is both

SECURITY WITHOUT CONFRONTATION

New ideas in the debate on security: non-aggressive defence

DAN SMITH

a central analytic tool and the basis of a key policy prescription. Security is indivisible. It is not possible for a state or alliance to increase its own security at the expense of another's.

These arguments emphasize the importance of non-military means of achieving security. At the same time they mean that the military contribution to security policy has to be very carefully shaped. If it is accepted that how armed forces are organized inevitably affects perceptions in other states in strategically important ways, it follows that military preparations should be consciously designed to avoid generating suspicions of hostile intent and armed forces need to be constructed in ways that ensure security without confrontation.

Strengthening the defence

This objective can be achieved by distinguishing between defensive and offensive elements of armed forces. The distinction between these elements is not crisp. Weaponry is offensive or defensive according to how it is used. Defensive strategies may entail counteroffensives, while offensive strategies may entail capabilities for defending newly conquered territory.

But in the end there is distinction, used by military analysts everywhere, focussing not on individual items of equipment but on the overall structure and deployment of forces. Policies of security without confrontation would increase defensive and reduce offensive capabilities.

A state or alliance adopting this approach would strengthen its defensive potential while foregoing forces required for major offensives. If it faced an antagonist whose armed forces structure justified fears that it had aggressive intentions (for example, its heavy concentrations of armoured troops), the result would be disparity between the forces of the two sides. It would have far fewer tanks, a much smaller air strike force, little or no naval capability for projecting power over great distances. Such discrepancies between opposing forces are today, virtually everywhere, identified as points of weakness and vulnerability.

The idea that stability and security derive from parity of forces is both ahistorical and illogical. It is a sign of the low level of strategic discourse that such a notion is widely ensconced in a near-sacred place. Stability is the result not of a balance of armed force, but an imbalance - of the superiority of defensive over offensive strength.

It is important to emphasize that the point is to strengthen the defence and weaken the offence simultaneously. If defences are strengthened without parallel reductions in offensive capabilities there will be no change in the perceptions of the other side and no lessening of confrontation. Some experts believe that the American "star wars" programme is technically feasible and might provide defence against nuclear attack. But since the U.S. nuclear-strike capability remains, the confrontation will be more tense and the security of the whole world, the United States included, will diminish.

Strategic and political implications

One feature of our current insecurity is the confrontation between two military alliances which are essentially constructed on wartime model. Until the formation of NATO, integrated transnational military command systems had been reserved for war itself. Peacetime alliances did not involve such integration of armed forces. Following the path of security without confrontation would have to mean, at least, the reconstruction of NATO and the Warsaw Pact so that they no longer resembled wartime organizations. A more appropriate, if longer term, however, is the mutual dissolution of the blocs.

Drawing by Igor Smirnov.

The abandoning of offensive forces would mean a great change in the world military order. Offensive capabilities ostensibly mounted as part of the East-West confrontation are partly available for use in the Third World. With their removal, the threat of military intervention in the Third World by advanced industrial states would be diminished.

How can one talk peace while making military preparations which can be seen to indicate another intent. Thus, even if conventional armed forces could be shaped for purely defensive functions while nuclear weapons remained in the arsenals, the gain would be minimal. It would, at the least, be necessary to end the integration of tactical nuclear weaponry in general-purpose forces and draw a strict line between conventional and nuclear forces. Even then nuclear capabilities would continue to look and be menacing.

On the other hand, proposals for nuclear disarmament make the most sense in the context of preparing for security without confrontation. It would be little gain to replace a nuclear by a conventional arms race. Military confrontation will be dangerous whatever the technology.

One of the advantages of this approach to security is that there are evident gains even if it is not universally adopted. A state which follows it would retain defensive strength to frustrate any aggressive intentions. The intensity of confrontation would be reduced, not its security. Moreover, by adopting such a policy, by evidently demonstrating its peaceful intent, a state would also encourage the other side to follow suit.

At that point a situation can be envisaged in which agreements would outlaw offensive forces - either completely or above certain levels - and a treaty would establish a security system created by independent actions of different states, whether concurrently or consecutively.

Dan Smith is vice-chairperson of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in Britain.

In the same boat

Following the publication of M.S. Gorbachev's article "Realities and Guarantees for a Safe World," our correspondent met with the Director of the Institute of World Economics and International Relations of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, Academician Evgeny Primakov. "That article is the quintessence of ideas that enable one to understand the new Soviet approaches to world problems, how we regard the world today, and what it will be like in the near future," Academician Evgeny Primakov said. "The 21st century is round the corner..."

N.T. What is essentially new about these approaches?

E.P. I would like to remind the readers of the New Times of the dialectical formula about the unity and conflict of opposites. Until a certain point in the past we unjustifiably emphasized the conflict of opposites and paid far less attention to the unity of the world in which the conflict of opposites takes place. And this in spite of the fact that the unity and integrity of the world is becoming increasingly tangible and obvious. The 27th CPSU Congress corrected that theoretical imbalance.

The case in point is not confined to the problem of survival uniting us all, although it is of principal importance. There is also the world economy, with all the regularities inherent in it. Generally speaking, they transcend the laws according to which the socialist and capitalist systems are developing.

There are also all-human problems which ought to be approached on the premise that the world is an interdependent and interconnected whole.

The ecological problem is one of them. If we continue to treat nature as savagely as we have done up to now we shall inevitably have to face great calamities. There is also the problem of new diseases, AIDS being a case in point; it appears to be a punishment meted out to the human race for its imprudence and failure to realize that it may very well destroy itself. Surely, joint efforts are called for to deal with these diseases.

Yet another problem is the backwardness of the Third World. It is not only a reproach to the whole of mankind, but also a threat to its well-being and security. These and many other problems must be dealt with jointly, and this is the essence of the new Soviet approach to international relations.

N.T. But be that as it may, the arms race remains the chief source of concern for the world public. How realistic is the idea of a nuclear-free world?

E.P. The present state of the world and its security rely on nuclear parity, amoral and unstable as it is. It is amoral, because one cannot build one's own security on the fear of mutual destruction. It is unstable, because a continued arms race spreading to new spheres as well as the upgrading of nuclear weapons and the development of new types of weapon bring closer the terrible prospect of a nuclear holocaust. At present nuclear parity remains a means of stabilization and deterrence, but a continued arms race would effectively put paid to this. There is only one way out: parity must be sustained at progressively lower levels until a minimal level of deterrence is attained. We believe nuclear weapons must be withdrawn from that parity altogether. What was proposed in the statement of January 15, 1986, is not a new slogan, but a realistic programme whose every stage had been carefully thought out and one that can and must be discussed and defined in greater detail.

In this connection I permit myself an excursus into the past.

I recently reread the famous Decree on Peace, and Lenin's comments on it in his address to the 2nd Congress of Soviets. Students of our revolution have always made a point of stressing that Soviet Russia proposed peace without annexations or indemnities. That was certainly the main thing, but certain details of interest and importance were overlooked. For instance, in his address Lenin spoke of the need to appeal to peoples and governments alike and the governments in question were imperialist. He emphasized that the Soviet proposals were not ultimatums and that this country was prepared to consider other proposals concerning the time limits within which the war was to be ended.

That Leninist principle is of great importance to us. We are not advancing ultimatums, we are prepared for reasonable compromize, mutual tolerance and concessions. This is especially relevant now that the threat of a nuclear holocaust is looming over the world.

We have a wealth of experience to fall back on and we now know much more about what makes up this world. We can even look into the future, and it is on the basis of scientific knowledge that we have advanced a programme for the phased elimination of nuclear weapons.

A year ago, at the time of the Reykjavik summit, the idea of a nuclear-free world was for the first time the subject of serious political negotiations. Today we have taken a real step towards such a nuclear-free world. And it seems to me that after Reykjavik the world community entered a new stage in its development, at any rate in the approach to resolving the problem of nuclear weapons. And this was borne out by the results of the recent visit of the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs to Washington. Our foreign policy shows flexibility and realism. We proposed 50 per cent cuts in strategic offensive nuclear weapons without linking them to any specific time limit for eliminating all nuclear weapons, but on the understanding that the ABM treaty is strictly adhered to. That linkage is necessary because once that treaty has been violated the way will be clear for a further arms race, but we say at the same time that once nuclear weapons have been eliminated the importance of setting up an international system of comprehensive security will assume another dimension.

N.T. What would such a system consist of?

E.P. In its vertical dimension it would incorporate agreements on military-political, economic, ecological, and humanita-

rian issues. We are not trying to evade any of them. In its horizontal dimension the system covers the entire world.

N.T. How is economic security to be understood in the light of the above?

E.P. In concrete terms it incorporates the whole package of measures to be taken to deal with the disproportions and explosive injustices that have piled up in international economic relations.

The Soviet Union recently voiced its readiness to contribute with that goal in mind to the UNCTAD raw materials general fund. We are prepared to do a great deal to stabilize the situation in world economic links by, among other things, assuming certain economic obligations. Surely, the situation cannot be considered normal when trading terms are consistently unfair to the developing countries and the scale of the developing countries' debts threatens the entire world economy. The key to resolving all these problems is the democratization of international economic relations, and that is what the Soviet Union is pressing for. In this particular case I mean the North-South dimension, but there is also the East-West dimension. Much stands in the way of progress here, as, for instance, embargoes and all kinds of political sanctions which are introduced out of time-serving considerations interfere with economic ties between capitalist and socialist countries. Naturally, we are against them. We are for a democratization that would cover that element of relations as well.

I would not, however, confine the issues of international economic security solely to democratization of world economic ties. The major problem of disarmament and development is also relevant here. It appears to be quite impossible to develop the Third World and close the huge gap between it and the rest of the world without releasing huge funds and using them for development. Here is one striking figure: national per capita incomes in the developing countries amount to a twelfth of what they are in the industrialized capitalist countries. Clearly, these problems cannot be resolved at once. What is needed are joint economic efforts, and there are various ways of making them.

N.T. Reports in the media remind us daily that there are wars going on in various parts of the world, albeit "small and local" wars, but nonetheless wars that take a huge toll of human lives, do terrible damage, and inflict enormous suffering. Regional conflicts are a dangerous source of international tension. How is that factor accounted for in today's Soviet policy?

E.P. Let us dwell first on the rationale for approaching such conflicts arising from economic, social and political contradictions in various parts of the world. It would be utterly unfair and dangerous to regard these conflict situations from the standpoint of Soviet-American rivalry. There is no going back to the times of John Foster Dulles, who used to say that if U.S. influence is removed in one part of the world (he meant the emergence of national states committed to an independent policy) there would inevitably appear a vacuum filled by the Soviet Union. That sort of an approach is fundamentally wrong. It must be discarded in both theory and practice.

U.S. students of regional conflicts distinguish the phase of controlling or managing conflict situations and the phase of settling or resolving them. I would like to call attention to the fact that the first phase of approaching conflict situations in this way does not even provide for their eventual settlement, but rather aims to accelerate or slow them down in the interests of U.S. policy and confrontation with the Soviet Union. Now that conflicts of that nature could spark off a global conflagration, such an approach is absolutely unacceptable. At the same time, the entire world community, along with the Soviet Union and the United States, must take parallel or joint action in order to settle international conflicts. The Soviet Union is placing the emphasis on the need to involve the world community more in all these matters.

What is the actual situation now? Regrettably, the United States often tries to push the Soviet Union aside and prevent it from contributing to resolving complex situations. That is how it was in the Middle East. This indicates that the second of the phases mentioned above is also used for purposes of confrontation with the Soviet Union. Would it not be more reasonable to act together with a view to resolving conflict situations?

There is one further important consideration here. Before the Geneva summit, President Reagan somehow attempted to confront the issue of arms reduction with the issue of settling regional conflicts. His line of reasoning went something like this: initially confidence is attained by settling regional conflicts and only subsequently are arms reduced. To me that statement of the problem seems absolutely unacceptable. The two problems cannot be opposed; a broad front approach must be taken to achieve progress. The two go together.

N.T. There is one other problem that appears both pressing and relevant. It was emphasized on many occasions in the past that on the ideological front there can be no peaceful coexistence. How can one realistically isolate ideological differences from international relations?

E.P. It would appear to me that here one must take into account the evolution of the very concept of peaceful coexistence.

Lenin gave a theoretical substantiation of the need for peaceful coexistence of states belonging to different systems with a view to ruling out war as a means of conducting policy and promoting multilateral relations and, above all, economic relations between them.

At the early stages of the establishment of the Soviet state, peaceful coexistence was regarded in practice as a respite before another attack on us. It was only natural that we tried to take advantage of that respite to take action to strengthen our security and defences.

After World War II the interpretation of peaceful coexistence as a form of the class struggle appeared. It is my view that that was a result of the cold war. With the benefit of hindsight one can now argue against that interpretation of peaceful coexistence, but the crux of the matter is not in the retrospective assessment, but rather in the current state of international relations. On a planet overstrained by the burden of weapons of mass destruction peace becomes the supreme asset and peaceful coexistence, the universal and only form of relations between all states, including those belonging to different political or social systems.

As was recorded in the Delhi Declaration, for instance, peaceful coexistence means not only ruling war out, but also ruling out force and even a demonstration of force in relations between states.

There is more to it, though. During the early years of Soviet government and in Lenin's lifetime we already understood peaceful coexistence as a positive development of relations and above all economic relations. Right now we are pressing for humanitarian problems to be included in that concept, too. Significantly, we meet with resistance on the part of the West over exactly that issue and one over which we have always been accused of all mortal sins. We have suggested holding a conference on human rights here in Moscow. The United States and some of its allies are opposed to the idea.

We must look for areas where the national interests of various countries coincide. These interests can and must coincide and it is on this that our approach to setting up a system of international security rests.

Interviewer **ALEXEI BUKALOV**

New Times has won its court case in Paris. What is the political background to the lawsuit against this Soviet magazine? What conclusions can be drawn from the court's decision?

A S S I G N A T I O N

devant le Tribunal de Grande Instance de PARIS

L'AN MIL NEUF CENT QUATRE VINGT SEPT, et le Dix Huit FEVRIER

A la requête de 1/ M. Lyndon LA ROUCHE, né le 8 Septembre 1922 à RODCHESTER (New Ampshire) USA, de nationalité américaine, demeurant Ibycus Farm, road 3 Box 91 - LEESBURG VIRGINIA 2207

POSTSCRIPT TO THE TRIAL

Our regular readers know that the Paris High Court has rejected the case brought against our magazine by the American national Lyndon LaRouche and the French European Working Party over our article "Nazism Without the Swastika" published in issue No. 36, 1986. LaRouche was made to pay costs, as well as damages to the magazine and the firms that distribute the French edition of the magazine.

The legal aspect of the affair raises no questions. It was an attempt to use legal means to compromise our exposure of LaRouche's activities, which were based on documentary material published in the U.S., the F.R.G., France and Sweden, and the world press generally. The activity of LaRouche's groups justifies the description nazism without the swastika, which was given to them by American journalist Dennis King.

However, there is more to the trial than meets the eye, and this has prompted the editors to make some additional comments.

These comments have little to do with the personality of Mr LaRouche. The group's penchant for self-advertisement and the desire to gain publicity, even by means of a scandal, has long been noted by the Western press. What is more worrying, however, is that such a small group, using dubious methods, can act so freely on the political scene. It regularly takes part in parliamentary and even presidential elections in various countries, and publishes newspapers and other materials imbued with the spirit of hatred and malice. LaRouche's newspapers and leaflets were sowing such hatred in Sweden when they libelled Olof Palme. One of their targets was Willy Brandt.

The argument advanced time and again is that this is merely a manifestation of democracy. Our invariable answer to this is that such democracy can destroy itself, as happened in Europe in the 1930s. That is why the Soviet journalist Ernst Henry, whose articles have for many years denounced fascism, saw fit to remind our readers of the grim lessons of the past. Mr LaRouche was stung by the comparison. We are convinced that democracy is obliged to defend itself, and not to pave the way for those who wish to destroy it.

Political developments in many Western countries give grounds for such concern. Democracy is often used by anti-democratic forces spearheaded by anti-Communist organizations. They go on the offensive, resorting to various means, including the law courts. We have already reported two lawsuits instituted in Luxemburg against a communist newspaper by the World Anti-Communist League. In Paris, LaRouche and the EWP brought lawsuits first against us and then against the Soviet magazine International Affairs. And we have learned that Jean-Marc Varaut, the lawyer who represented LaRouche's interests, is involved in litigation started against the Soviet paper Literaturnaya Gazeta. In the U.S., a lawsuit has been brought against the Soviet newspaper Izvestia. One cannot help thinking that it is an orchestrated campaign.

The campaign is not being waged in the law courts alone. New Times correspondent Vladimir Zhitomirsky, who recently visited Chautauqua, found that LaRouche's supporters were very active at the Soviet-American meeting there. From that meeting we received a curious document published at LaRouche's headquarters in Leesburg, Virginia. It is a bulky volume containing the minutes of the hearings of a Commission to Investigate Human Rights Violations in the United States which met in Washington on May 26-27, 1987, and was attended by lawyers from Spain, Sweden, the U.S.A., Guyana, India and Britain. We do not know what the political views of these representatives were, but the scope of LaRouche's operations (including the financial aspect) speaks for itself. The commission's aim was to prove the violation of the rights of Mr LaRouche, who is allegedly the target of a virulent campaign by the U.S. authorities (notably by the Department of Justice) in conjunction with New Times. Leaving LaRouche aside, what strikes one is that among the victims of human rights violations in the U.S.A. mentioned by the commission were Ivan Demyanyuk, the butcher of Maidanek and Treblinka, and Karl Linnas, butcher of Tartu concentration camp. The commission is angry that they have been stripped of American citizenship and extradited. Another alleged victim mentioned by the commission was war criminal Arthur Rudolph, who built rockets for Hitler and later for the Pentagon. LaRouche and his followers are openly coming out in defence of "nazis with the swastika." It is only fair to describe them as "nazis without the swastika." Linked with the defence of nazi criminals is LaRouche's denial of nazi atrocities, including the mass extermination of European Jews in death camps. He and his adherents proclaim this to be a "myth."

The American press has recently published some intriguing facts about these new "champions" of democracy. An investigation into their financial swindles has long been under way. They are suspected of pocketing the money raised for "research in energetics" (LaRouche is an active backer of SDI) and for combating AIDS (a popular charity).

It must be said for the sake of fairness that LaRouche has not always been a "victim" of the American authorities. The City Paper of August 28, 1987, recalled that "in the first few years of the Reagan presidency, LaRouche enjoyed unusual access to mid- and high-level officials, especially in the law-enforcement and security field." He met two deputy directors of the CIA to discuss security. The newspaper named William Clark, former presidential national security adviser, among LaRouche's patrons. We need not further pursue the reasons for LaRouche's and his followers' fall from grace (they attribute it to "Soviet intrigues" and New Times). But the story gives us an idea of the murky waters in which right-wing extremists operate under American "super-democracy."

LaRouche and his followers are consolidating their presence in Western Europe. We have already had occasion to write about a book by the West German authors Helmut Lorscheid and Leo Müller, "Code name: Schiller," about the EWP's activities in the F.R.G. (see New Times No. 28, 1987). To attract attention, the EWP has set up a "Schiller Institute," one of whose activities was to organize a conference to "save the Western alliance." Its main tasks are to strengthen links with the U.S., oppose the "decoupling" of Europe from the U.S., and ensure that NATO gets the particle beam weapon, which would make it possible to "resolve" the conflict between West and East.

These are just some of the details about those who brought and lost the Paris case. The staff of New Times did not identify the case with France, the French public and Soviet-French relations. There were no grounds for doing so as the plaintiff was an American extremist who gave his exact address: Ibycus Farm, Leesburg, Virginia, U.S.A. It is possible that one of the aims of those who brought the suit was to damage Soviet-French relations (the past year has unfortunately seen many such attempts).

The editors were aware of the risks involved in taking up a lawsuit in another country and under a legal system little known to us and devised for French and not for Soviet citizens. An element of risk remains as it cannot be ruled out that LaRouche will appeal, and the case will then be heard in another chamber of the Palais de Justice. But, as in the first case, we count on common sense and the appreciation of the fact that our magazine drew its conclusions on the political substance of LaRouche's cause from objective data gleaned from the press in the F.R.G., U.S., Sweden and France.

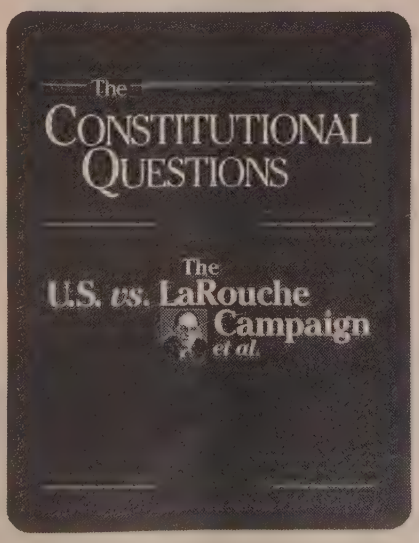
It is not customary to thank the court, but we would like to thank our defence lawyers Maitre Joe Nordmann and Maitre Bernard Grelon for their efforts. Incidentally, the case did not envisage the presence of plaintiff and respondent, and only the lawyers spoke in court. Our thanks are also due to our fellow journalists in France, Sweden, the U.S. and the F.R.G., who helped us to collect evidence. We had to present all the sources we used in our publications, and not only to quote chapter and verse, but to make translations into French. This was a difficult job, but we managed to do it quickly enough.

Finally, we would like to raise a question that concerns Soviet journalists and lawyers. LaRouche and his followers pressed legal charges on what was clearly a fabrication. They accused us groundlessly of libel. But the Western press is full of slander of the Soviet Union and its citizens. And we often leave it unanswered. We should not do so. This was suggested to us by our French lawyers who have brought a counterclaim against the plaintiffs. They demanded that the court not only reject the accusations as "unfounded and aimed solely at silencing the papers which have shed light on the activity of Mr LaRouche and his followers," but declare that the respondents have provided evidence to prove the truth of the statements being challenged, that the court should justify the respondent and, under Article 700 of the French Civil Code, pay the respondents compensation. This requirement has been complied with.

So there is every reason to believe that courts in other countries can and must take up cases of slander and defamation against Soviet citizens. Needless to say, this applies even more to the Soviet courts, whose duty it is to defend the rights and dignity of Soviet citizens.

Legal awareness worldwide has grown dramatically and the fact that the U.S.S.R. is treating human rights, including the rights of its own citizens, very seriously should prompt a more active use of legal instruments to protect the ideas of peace, cooperation and democracy. ■

The cover of the LaRouche case hearings.



THE BOOMERANG OF TERRORISM

ANDREI GRACHEV, Cand. Sc. (Hist.)

In the eerie play of moonlight,
The demons grimace...
ALEXANDER PUSHKIN

Even in the calm of the summer vacation season, when diplomatic activity and world politics are at a low ebb and the press feeds its readers prepared fare, the information lull was shattered this year by reports of terrorist outrages.

There was a bomb explosion in a Barcelona supermarket (15 people killed, 35 injured). Gunmen in Athens, firing at pointblank range, seriously wounded the Chairman of the General Confederation of Greek Workers. An Air Afrique airliner en route from Brazzaville to Paris was hijacked (one passenger killed, about 30 injured). Sikh terrorists shot and killed more than 70 passengers of interurban buses in Punjab and Haryana states in India. On one and the same day bombs were exploded in a Kabul market place (3 persons killed, 10 severely wounded), and in practically the very centre of London. Attempts were made on the lives of India's Prime Minister and the President of Sri Lanka. And this is a far from complete list of such happenings in that "quiet season."

Terrorists do not take holidays. Moreover, whenever the police and "terrorologists" aver that this sinister phenomenon is on the wane, the terrorists prove the contrary by committing more outrages amazingly synchronized with the most crucial developments in the various countries and in the world as a whole.

What is the secret of the tenacity of terrorism, which has been condemned from every platform and pulpit, unanimously denounced by politicians of all trends, and which has not only long since lost the romantic glamour it might have had in past centuries, but has virtually been disclaimed by everyone. For no one in the world today is prepared to assume the dubious honour of being a patron of terrorists.

Why has terrorism reached such proportions as to give rise to no less alarm than the panicky fear of the spread of AIDS?

It is a well-known fact that the total number of the victims of terrorism is in no way comparable not only to the vast number who die of hunger and disease in various countries or who perish in regional wars and internecine conflicts, but also to the toll taken annually by automobile accidents or by ordinary crime. It is estimated that terrorist acts committed in the past 16 years all over the world have caused the death of about 5,000 people - less than the number of murders registered in 1983 in the American state of Texas alone.

The curious thing here is that the public reaction to terrorism and the appraisal given it by politicians and the mass media in the West are out of all proportion to its actual dimensions. There are several reasons for this.

October 31, 1984. Two Sikh guards opening fire on Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. A terrorist act which shook the world...

First, the activation in the past 10-15 years of extremism of a right, "left," religious and nationalistic order, the growth in the number of political, propaganda and terrorist acts carried out by extremists.

Second, the fact that this contradictory social phenomenon is sensationalized to the utmost by the extremists in an effort to compensate for the smallness of their groups and the narrowness of their social base by spectacular actions designed to create the impression of being a formidable force.

The third and perhaps most important reason is the heightened interest evinced by world reaction in using political extremism and terrorism for the achievement of its own domestic and foreign policy objectives.

How has it happened that terrorism, which many were inclined to hastily dismiss as an outgoing archaic form of the desperate but futile protest of individual fanatics or as the escapades of petty provocateurs, has developed into a tangible threat to international stability and security?

To answer this question we must take a closer look at both the most characteristic long-standing features of terrorism and the new features it has acquired in the 20th century. And, of course, to ascertain the main thing: who gains by terrorism, among whom is there the heightened demand for this commodity which in the final analysis creates the supply?

Weapon of the weak or the strong?

Terrorism is by no means a new word in the political lexicon. The idea of resorting to the assassination of monarchs, the shooting of presidents, the explosion of bombs and the seizure of hostages in order to resolve domestic political problems or international conflicts, to accelerate the historical process or direct it into the desired channels has its roots in

the distant past. In the many years of coexistence with terrorism a great many definitions and explanations of the phenomenon, some of them mutually exclusive, have been put forward. A particularly wide variety of views on political, and especially international terrorism have been voiced in the past few decades.

This is evidently due to the fact that terrorism, being no longer confined to the protests of desperate individuals and having spilled over national boundaries, has begun in our epoch to develop into widely ramified international covert structures serving the interests and ambitions of definite political centres and forces.

The danger terrorism presents in the nuclear age is all the greater since any international crisis provoked or aggravated by terrorists could have the effect of a live match carelessly dropped at a petrol station. In the opinion of Walter Laqueur, a leading expert on the problem of terrorism, international terrorism, as distinct from its purely local varieties, can easily lead to war. Moreover, it must be borne in mind that the shot fired in a new Sarajevo would rear up into the atmosphere as a nuclear mushroom.

However, despite this obvious danger, attempts to establish terrorism as a constant element of international relations are strangely enough becoming more and more frequent.

If we sum up the concepts of Western politologists on terrorism, we will find that, apart from the nonsense about "Moscow's terrorist plot to destabilize the West," they boil down to the rather banal contention that "the terrorists will never win, but neither will society ever be able to defeat them." Some of these theorists define terrorism as the weapon of the weak resorted to in a frenzy of despair, as the last resort in the struggle against the strong - governments, states, foreign enslavers or their domestic dictators. Others, on the contrary, maintain that terrorism in the international arena is the weapon of the strong, namely, the great powers and the superpowers who, in the context of a nuclear stalemate, settle international scores threw the terrorists, with the latter acting as intermediaries of a sort. From this the curious conclusion is drawn that terrorism contributes to the preservation of peace, inasmuch as t makes it possible to settle international issues at the pre-nuclear level. Still others declare terrorism to be the equivalent of the "great equalizer" - the six-shooter - not in relations between individuals but between states.

Terrorism is violence directed chiefly against innocent people and committed in the name of, or under cover of, political goals. This ugly feature of terrorism is widely commented on by the press and underscored by politicians and experts. However, in their self-righteous wrath the Western denouncers of terrorism as a rule pass over in silence one important aspect of the problem. Yes, a terrorist act is an act of political violence, a crime all the more heinous because its victims are innocent people. But political violence is not confined to terrorism. It, alas, takes many forms - war, aggression, the occupation of other people's territory, the oppression of national minorities, racist terror and fascist dictatorships. In a word, all that in the vast majority of instances serves not of course as a justification, but, let us say, as a point of departure, the impulse for an eruption of retaliatory violence, including terroristic violence. Thus, in order to understand terrorism - and we must understand it if we want to fight it effectively - it should be regarded as an element of a broader system of the use of violence for the attainment of political ends, and in particular in international relations.

On July 10, 1985, two blasts thundered in New Zealand's port of Auckland: two French secret agents had attached mines to the ship Rainbow Warrior which belonged to the Greenpeace organization.

"Violence and war exist everywyere," Stephen Segaller, a British researcher, observes, "yet the current dominant ideology rediscovers all these dramatic problems of violence only when it is a question of terrorism." At the same time, such forms of violence against humanity as exploitation, domination, oppression and hunger are not taken into account.

What Jupiter may do

Mention must of course be made of state terrorism which, hiding in the shadow of ordinary terrorism, deals from behind its back far deadlier blows than are delivered by the homegrown terrorist.

In its most consummate form, with pretensions to political and moral justification, state terrorism is embodied in the foreign policy course steered by the present U.S. administration and in the terroristic, neoglobalist practices of such countries as South Africa and Israel, as well as dictatorial regimes. Dressing up ordinary terrorist activity in police or army uniform, and sometimes in the frogmen's outfits from special service stores, the Western advocates of state terrorism seek to give it the respectable appearance of a lawful instrument of foreign policy. In practice this means substituting for international law the "right" to lynch law in international relations without any regard for the sovereignty of other countries or the standards of morality.

"We may never have the kind of

evidence that can stand up in an American court of law," U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz argues. "But we cannot allow ourselves to become the Hamlet of nations, worrying endlessly over whether and how to respond. A great nation with global responsibilities cannot afford to be hamstrung by confusion and indecisiveness." And so, all are equal before the law, but "great nations" (here Shultz doubtless had in mind the only "chosen" nation) obey different laws. As the Romans put it, "quod licet Jovi, non licet bovi." (What Jupiter may do the bull may not).

But what is the difference in principle between the seizure as hostages of the population of a whole country, say Grenada, and the seizure of the personnel and premises of a foreign embassy; between the interception of an Egyptian civilian aircraft by U.S. air force fighters and the hijacking of airliners; the mining of Nicaragua's ports and the laying of mines in the Persian Gulf; plotting the assassination of leaders of foreign countries, like Patrice Lumumba or Fidel Castro, and plotting the assassination of the Pope, Olof Palme or Indira Gandhi; and, lastly, what is the difference between the explosions organized by Islamic extremists in Beirut and the blowing up engineered by CIA agents of the home of a pro-Palestinian public leader in the Lebanese capital? There is no difference, except that there are things that are permitted no one but Jupiter. There is a difference also in the number of victims; it is a well-known fact that as a result of the American air raid on Libya carried out in retaliation for the death of three U.S. servicemen in a bomb explosion in a West Berlin discotheque for U.S. soldiers, more than 100 civilians were killed. State terrorism is practised on state scale. The same yardstick is used also by Israel, which occupied and devastated Lebanon in the course of a "Peace for Galilee" "anti-terrorist" operation in answer to the attempt on the life of the Israeli ambassador in Britain.

With such an exchange of blows between terrorists and anti-terrorists it is pointless to try to determine who is replying to whom, especially in the light of Washington's doctrine of "preventive strikes" at terrorists, which means the "right" to mete out punishment for crimes not yet committed.

There is also another aspect of the question: terrorism is an extremely convenient cover for those waging an offensive against revolutionary forces and national liberation movements. I have in mind the role of terrorists as political provocateurs.

From Dwarf to Goliath

Indeed, provocation is the meaning and substance, the basic purpose of any terrorist act. The important thing for the terrorist is not the concrete result of the operation - the murder or removal by other means of a political leader, or the death of hostages - but the repercussions of the act, the public reaction to it, the possibility, while aiming at one person, to hold thousands and millions at gunpoint. In this sense even violence - the main hallmark of terrorism - is not the end but the means for it, a sort of megaphone with which it draws the attention of the public both to its declared demands and programmes and, often, to the very fact of its existence. "The target (of the terrorist-**A.G.**) is not an individual victim," Stephen Segaller says. "It is a large audience."

The Western mass media, with their fondness for sensationalism and their weakness for revelling in scenes of violence,act as resonators amplifying the echo of terroist gunshots many times over and making Goliaths of run-of-the-mill political pygmies.

With the rapid developoment of the mass media, both the methods by which the terrorists seek to draw attention to themselves and the targets of their attacks have begun to change. Attacks are levelled primarily at personalities whose very names are guaranteed to attract the maximum attention of the international audience: diplomats, including "honorary consuls," as in Graham Greene's novel, the passengers on international flights and sea cruises, Olympic athletes and even participants in prestigious conferences, ministers of OPEC countries, for instance.

Thus, the actions of the modern terrorists could not have acquired their present dimensions had it not been for the coverage given them by the mass media. In some cases the press and television in effect give added impetus to the criminal activities of terrorists, since many of them might not have occurred had their organizers not counted on receiving wide publicity.

All modern terrorists need publicity; the more obscure they are, the more they depend on it and this leads to the emergence of something like "stage direction" of terrorism. "The terrorist," British Cabinet Secretary Sir Robert Armstrong remarked, "is confident that when he hijacks an aircraft full of innocent passengers he is also hijacking the TV screens, the radio waves and the headlines."

Incidentally, terrorists sometimes hijack TV and radio stations not figuratively but literally. In other cases they enter into virtual compacts with TV companies. The most recent example of such "terrorvision" was the showing on American television of all the harrowing details of the detention in Beirut of the passengers of a Transworld airliner in June 1985. At the final stage of this drama with a happy ending, the U.S. President himself appeared on the screen to welcome the freed hostages personally. The advertising value of this terrorist act clearly surpassed all the expectations of the hijackers and, specialists believe, was bound to "raise the market value" of any subsequent terrorist action.

"Terrorism has become a convenient pretext..."

However, the main service rendered the reactionaries by the terrorists is ideological. Terrorist provocations, especially those staged under cover of "left" sounding slogans, "proletarian" or "communist" labels or "anti-imperialist" manifestos enable the ruling circles of Western powers to whip up anti-communist feeling, to sow distrust of the foreign policy of socialist countries, to fan xenophobia, chauvinism and racist sentiment with regard to Arabs, Iranians, Armenians, blacks and all other "heretics."

Something of a record in misinformation of Western public opinion by speculating on the terrorist theme was set by the moral torture to which the Bulgarian citizen Sergei Antonov, accused of complicity in an attempt on the life of the Pope, was subjected for many years.

Underlying the slander campaign charging Bulgaria, Cuba, the U.S.S.R. and other socialist countries of involvement in "international terrorism" was the desire on the part of imperialist quarters to ascribe to the socialist countries, the national liberation movement and the working class generally their own predatory behavior in the world arena.

One of the main purposes of the spread of notorious myths about the "hand of Moscow" is to calumniate, to compromise the movement of social protest and the liberation struggle of the working people and oppressed nations, deprive it of national roots and present it as an "international conspiracy."

By equating the anti-imperialist struggle of the peoples with "international terrorism," the ideologues of imperialism seek to justify their own expansionist actions in the world arena, accusing the U.S.S.R., its allies and the national liberation movement in the Asian, African and Latin American countries of "violating international law and order."

The commotion around "international terrorism"is used by the ruling classes in the capitalist countries also for their offensive against the civil rights of the population of their own countries. As the West German Stern journal has observed, "terrorism has become a convenient excuse for fighting the entire left. The hysteria whipped up around it has been used to depict all leftists as criminals."

The futile attempt of the Western special services to use the Antonov case to cast a shadow on the policy of Bulgaria and other socialist countries was an instructive reminder that there cannot and must not be any evasiveness or ambiguity in the question of dissociation from terrorism which must be categorically and unequivocally condemned whatever the motives given for terrorist actions and whoever the victims of these actions may be.

Observing the many and diverse forms the West has found for the use of terrorism in the military, political, ideological and even the commercial fields (witness the gigantic growth of the industries producing anti-terrorist protection devices, and the flourishing of the numerous private security agencies and insurance companies), one cannot but conclude that if terrorism did not exist someone would surely invent it. As a matter of fact, there already are such promoters.

Double agents

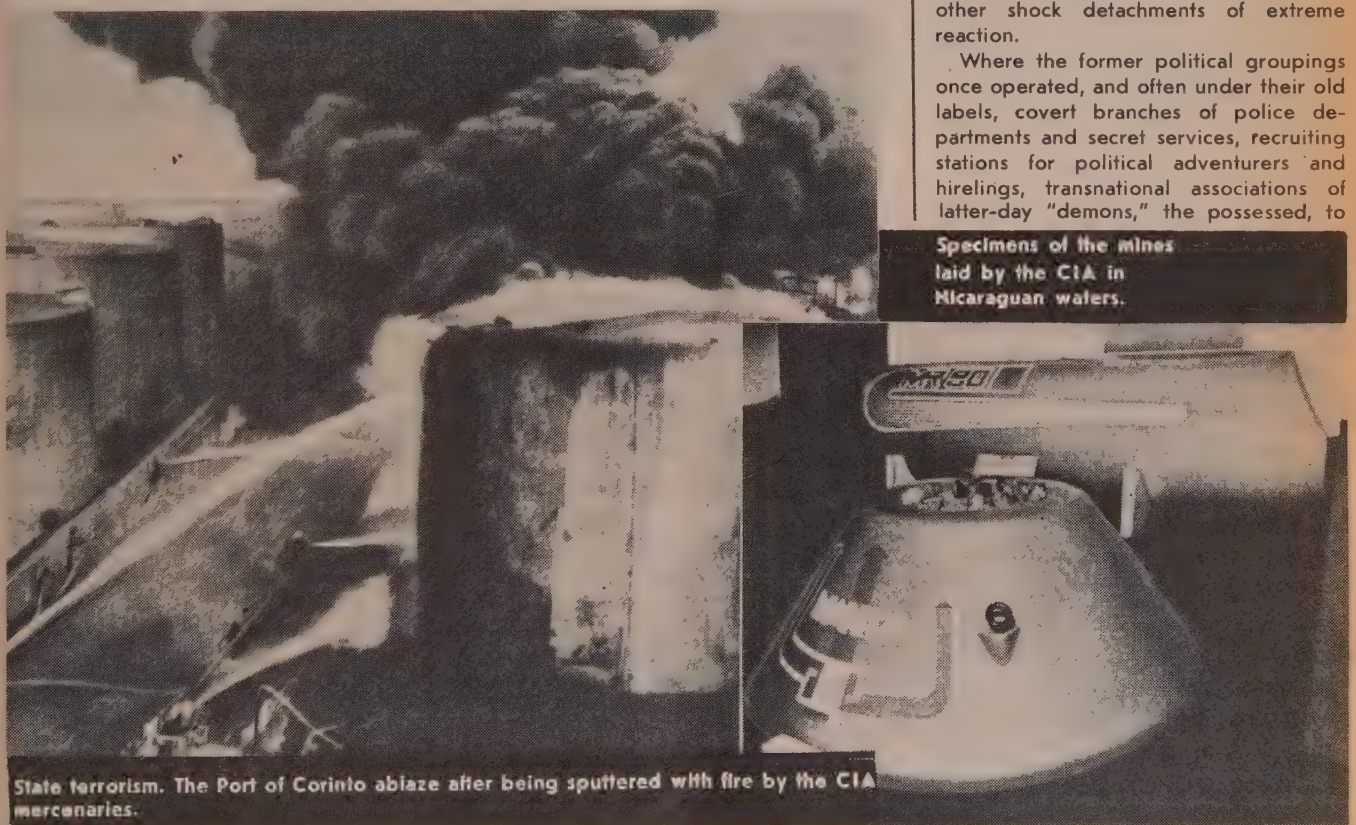
The reference is not only to the exaggeration by the Western press of the phenomenon to proportions undreamed of by the terrorists themselves. We have in mind the direct involvement of the special services in keeping the terrorist organizations afloat, financing and equipping them, directly or indirectly manipulating them. The very nature of conspiratorial groups affords broad opportunities for this.

Ever since its inception political extremism has been unable to rid itself of the shadow of the police informer, spy or double agent - the provocateur. Marx and Engels wrote: "The chief characteristic of the conspirators' way of life is their battle with the police, to whom they have precisely the same relationship as thieves and prostitutes. The police tolerate the conspiracies, and not just as a necessary evil: they tolerate them as centres which they can keep under easy observation...as the forges of revolt, which ...has become a tool of government quite as necessary as the police themselves, and finally as a recruiting place for their own political mouchards."

As applied to the terrorists of today these far from laudatory appraisals of the anarchists of last century seem too flattering. The fact is that those rather numerous and active groups of extremists in Western Europe and also in some developing countries which emerged on the fringes of major social movements in the capitalist countries or of the national liberation struggle in Asia, Africa and Latin America have in recent years outlived their time and vanished into the limbo of the past.

Many members of these "brigades," "fronts," "proletarian cells" and "red army factions" saw in "partisan warfare" the only way of impelling society into revolution, hastening the historical process through bomb explosions, kidnappings and killings of political leaders (recall Aldo Moro), industrialists and judges. Having broken with social movements, having come out as the sworn enemies of the working class, its trade unions and political parties, and set themselves in opposition to the state and society, these ultra-left groups degenerated into bands of provocateurs whose activity more and more frequently fell in line with the sallies of the neofascist and other shock detachments of extreme reaction.

Where the former political groupings once operated, and often under their old labels, covert branches of police departments and secret services, recruiting stations for political adventurers and hirelings, transnational associations of latter-day "demons," the possessed, to



Specimens of the mines laid by the CIA in Nicaraguan waters.

State terrorism. The Port of Corinto ablaze after being sputtered with fire by the CIA mercenaries.

invoke the Dostoyevsky image, began to function.

In the same conglomeration you find nationalist, separatist, fanatical religious groups which, even when they give expression to legitimate aspirations of discriminated minorities, discredit their own cause by their terrorist actions and deprive it of broad public support.

The whole of this archipelago of terrorism is linked together by invisible (and for many members of the terrorist organizations, unknown) threads and channels of information, supply of weapons and exchange of hitmen for the most audacious operations. And above all else, by the common striving to destabilize the international situation, build tension in various parts of the globe, and provoke political crises.

Extirpate the roots

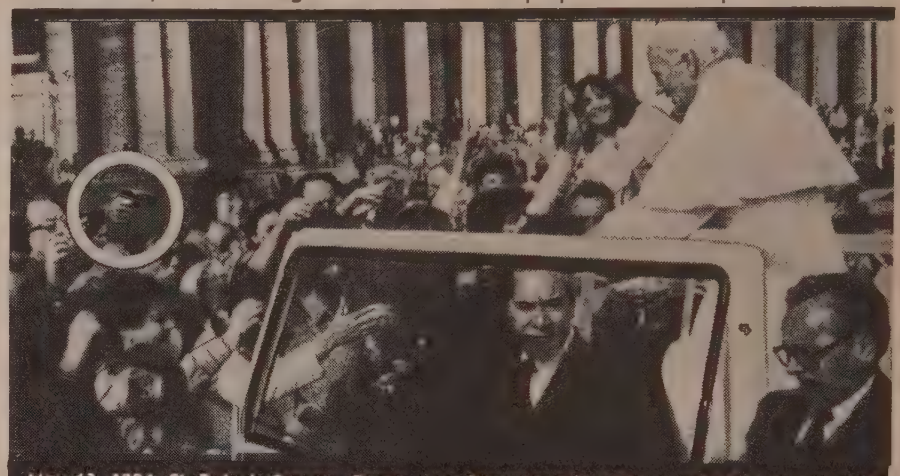
How to combat this political mafia which, incidentally, is not averse to contact with the criminal mafia? Can the further spread of this "20th-century plague" be prevented?

If all the verbal anathema poured on the terrorists by government, public and political leaders of every conceivable trend could be materialized, there is no doubt whatever that terrorism would be completely wiped out. The trouble is that all this condemnation of terrorism is, regrettably, not translated into consistent, let alone agreed, action on the part of the international community.

More, as often as not the most vehement philippics levelled at terrorism, particularly from Washington, are essentially negated by the practical actions of the administration, which continues to use the theme of terrorism both as a pretext for a political campaign against the socialist and developing countries and as an argument to justify its bellicose neoglobalist policy. The Washington doctrine of combating "international terrorism" has in the past few years found embodiment in numerous terroristic foreign policy actions. These actions have been a flagrant violation of the principles of international law and not infrequently of internal United States' legislation, as in the case of the Iran-contras affair.

In effect, the world community is faced today with the urgent need to find a way of fighting international terrorism not just in word but in deed. One way is to answer violence with tenfold violence, to reply to terrorism with state terrorism. But that way, as we have seen, merely gives rise to new seats of terrorism and multiplies crisis situations. Was it not of this sort of "counterterrorists" that Marx and Engels ironized, when they compared such warriors with mighty, broad-shouldered giants of the Italian epics of chivalry "...armed with enormous cudgels who, despite the fact that they lash about them wildly and make a frightening din in battle, never manage to hit their foes but only the trees in the vicinity." The only difference is that the trans-oceanic warriors against terrorism bring down not trees but the pillars of international stability.

By legalizing lawlessness in international relations, undermining the basic principles of intercourse between states, such a policy jeopardises the rule of law worldwide.



May 13, 1981. St. Peter's Square, Rome. In a few seconds Agca, a member of a Turkish neofascist organization, will shoot at the Pope.... Later, Western secret services will start foul play known as the "Antonov affair."

But there is another way, the way advocated by the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries which involve struggle against international terrorism in their concept of a comprehensive system of international security. This way envisages combining a firm rebuff to terrorist machinations with the working out of effective methods of preventing terrorism, of uprooting it.

The decisive precondition here is the elimination of violence and the threat of violence from international relations, movement towards creating a nuclear-free and non-violent world, putting an end to the crises and conflicts in various parts of the world which provide a rich soil for international terrorism. This means settling the conflicts and removing seats of tension in the Middle East, Central America and southern Africa, ending racism and apartheid and the practice of infringing on the rights and interests of sovereign states.

The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries are convinced and dedicated opponents of terrorism, both internal and international. This was clearly stated at the 27th Congress of the CPSU and in joint statements issued by the Warsaw Treaty countries. Rejecting terrorism in principle, the socialist countries are ready actively and in good faith to cooperate in practice with other countries in combating the evil.

Amplifying this position, Mikhail Gorbachev in his article, "Reality and guarantees for a secure world," advanced the proposal to set up under United Nations aegis a tribunal for the investigation of acts of international terrorism.

In a world fighting for survival and burdened by tragic conflicts and crises, neither the East nor the West has the right to allow terrorism to develop into a new global problem. Hence it is necessary to renounce the use of terrorism as a political or propaganda trump card against the other side, to abandon the illusion that terrorism can be targeted in only one direction, and that the use of violence will not boomerang against the user.

In fact it has already boomeranged against the U.S. when Iranian boats in the Persian Gulf tried to hit American helicopters with the Stinger rockets lavishly supplied by the U.S. to Afghan counterrevolutionaries.

A stern rebuff to all manifestations of terrorism is an imperative of our time, an integral part of the common struggle for peace, for human rights, for the right of all nations to free and independent development.

Photos from Time, Newsweek (U.S.A.), Stern (F.R.G.), Panorama (Italy).

IS THE MAJORITY ALWAYS RIGHT?

GENNADY BATYGIN, D. Sc. (Philosophy)

Every nation, every country has its own unique political experience. The specificities of national psychology, way of life and culture render the very concept of an ideal political system futile. The theocratic regimes of the early Middle Ages, Oriental tyrannies, absolute monarchies, military dictatorships, parliamentary republics, tribalism, anarchies, ochlocracies, communitarianism... But democracy is the most advanced socio-political system of government. The independent choice of form of social organization is a sovereign inalienable right of every nation. At the same time, the 20th century has confronted mankind with problems without precedent in history. One of them is the formation of a global, planetary political "space" in which each country, when solving its internal problems, cannot and does not have the right to forget its responsibility to the world community.

The complexity of the problem is obvious. In the face of the coming changes, socio-political and national distinctions recede into the background and the protection of human rights today determines a country's reputation and the degree of trust it deserves. Mankind's interests are gaining unquestionable priority over the interests of states, classes, nations and ideologies. The doctrine of non-violence as a principle of relations between people is also becoming dominant in assessing both the international and the domestic political situation.

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The course adopted by the CPSU in April has changed much in political traditions. The call issued by the Party to learn to live in conditions of democracy is helping to discard established notions. For prior to perestroika something else passed for democracy - complete uniformity of political choice, implicit obedience to the leadership and social vigour directed exclusively at approving adopted decisions.

Today we have discovered that to proclaim democracy and the skill to live and work in conditions of democracy are by no means the same thing. We are gradually becoming aware of the fundamental postulates of democracy as a certain type of popular political culture. I would specify the following among them.

Firstly, recognition of man, the individual as a sovereign subject of social action. More recently we preferred to speak of the individual only as a member of a collective, a class, or society as a whole. "Human resources," "manpower" - these terms, once fairly widespread in the socio-economic lexicon, conjure up a frightening picture of a Leviathan state that processes human beings - human material - in some merciless, faceless machines. The ideal of sacrifice and ascetism, the unquestionable priority of the social over the personal are gradually giving way to the concept of a balanced combination of the interests of society and the individual. The individual is beginning to acquire a face. We are learning to have our own point of view, our own dignity and our own honour.

It is becoming clear that the well-being of society is not so much the attained level of national wealth as the well-being and quality of life of each family, each individual. The individual's economic independence and confidence that the result of his work will get public recognition regardless of the views he might express create a qualitatively new basis for promoting democracy. The individual with his personal position in life, his personal convictions and personal responsibility is in democracy the single, most important consideration.

Secondly, there is the rejection of the notion that people are absolutely identical in their interests, are, so to say, monolithic. Distinctions between people - class, cultural or even psychological - can turn into contradictions, and then the visible consensus disappears like a mirage. Democracy is a form of political life for the very reason that it provides the possibility of and the rules for aligning different, even contradictory, interests. Its aim is the creation of a reliable mechanism for protecting rights and excluding violent solutions to conflict situations.

I must say here that the sociological interpretation of a conflict is by no means limited, say, to a street brawl. There are several candidates for a single position of leadership in a situation of so-called positional or role conflict: a violator of traffic rules and a traffic policeman, or, for instance, the author and the editor, who, on reading this line, decided to delete it, then thought about the reaction of the other party, the author, and agreed to restore it. Daily life is full of such conflicts, and everything depends on our ability to work to resolve them. There even exists a sort of analogue of democratic procedure that regulates day-to-day contacts between people - etiquette. And it is useful to know its rules. Democracy is also a sort of etiquette, but in respect of political power. One can be unhappy about the city Soviet, but one must accept the rules of public order. Twenty-three per cent of managers do not want to change their attitudes because perestroika affects their interests, but they do have the absolute right to uphold their positions in bodies of political representation. This justifies my intention to cite yet another definition of democracy - procedures of correlating interests.

THE INDIVIDUAL IS BEGINNING TO ACQUIRE A FACE. WE ARE LEARNING TO HAVE OUR OWN POINT OF VIEW, OUR OWN DIGNITY AND OUR OWN HONOUR

Sociologists and political scientists have no illusions about social interaction without conflict. Models of a "paradise on earth" flowing with milk and honey, in which all interests are so unselfish and noble that even the problem of correlating them appears artificial, are gradually receding into the past, together with the Utopian revolutionism of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Today we understand the real worth of thinking alike and are learning to live with diversity of interests and opinions and to accept dissent as a valuable social asset.

Thirdly, as a form of social self-government, democracy does not reject but, on the contrary, presupposes the existence of a mechanism of regulation and, if you like, the suppression of forms of activity that violate established rules. Here there is a common interest that unites people and it does not have to be an interest of each and all. Furthermore, like any political structure, democracy generates a bureaucratic apparatus. Here one discerns a contradiction, a paradox, but this is not an ersatz or apparent contradiction, but a genuine one. Strict abidance by the law, injunctions, documents - everything that it is customary to grumble about and call red tape - is an essential albeit unsatisfactory condition of a person's civil rights and freedoms. "I do what I want" - is in no sense a bureaucratic principle but an expression of arbitrariness and subjective ambition. A smoothly operating administrative

mechanism, independent of subjective bias and based on observance of the law, is evidence of a high level of democracy and, conversely, the absence of such bureaucracy leads to anarchy and destruction.

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Many believe, unfortunately, that as it derives from the word "demos," democracy comes from somewhere "below" and that the higher a person climbs on the administrative ladder the further he moves from"the people."The illusion arises that instead of officials we should nominate - how much meaning can be invested in the word! - "ordinary" people, who alone can express the interests of the people. But the paradox is that most officials and bureaucrats are very ordinary people and that, perhaps, their problem is just their inability to transcend their ordinariness. The professionalism and competence of administrative personnel are much more important in ensuring democratic freedoms than their socio-class origin.

Democracy does not descend from "above" like manna and is not produced to order. It is a result of experience. It is necessary, in other words, to pass through the school of political awareness starting with the ABC. The first steps have been taken in this country to promote political competition in elections to local Soviets of People's Deputies, with several candidates contesting each seat. The practice of electing team leaders, shop managers and plant directors is becoming more widespread. Profound qualitative changes have been achieved here - the very possibility of choice engenders a sense of political responsibility. But electing people to posts and democracy are by no means the same thing.

Stormy meetings lasting many hours, discarded rules of procedure, fiery speeches, slights, triumphs, confusion.... And finally the new leader of the collective is elected - the favourite of all. He at once initiates reforms, and again everyone bubbles with enthusiasm, but then it turns out that the enterprise is not getting the metal it requires. The new director sends telegrams to the plants that are behind schedule with deliveries, complains to the ministry, to the State Planning Committee - but still there is no metal.

The old director was not liked by workers for his grim sternness and taciturnity. He seldom appeared in the production shops, was a man of few words, and his appearance was anything but striking. Yet he knew how to get metal, components, and freight cars in which to deliver the output to customers. True, the mechanism of management and production wheezed and creaked, but it worked.

The public's favourite speaks passionately at meetings without the help of any prepared text. Workers, too, have started taking the floor more frequently. But the plan is not being fulfilled and there are no longer any bonuses. The process of sobering up sets in quickly - mere talk is not enough. "I like him - I do not like him" is not democracy. Democracy implies work, usually without ostentation and din.

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The lessons are continuing. The results of such lessons are heightned democratic awareness and an understanding of the fact that elections alone are no guarantee of democracy. The criteria by which the choice is made and our readiness for a reasonable optimal choice are of fundamental importance.

Hence the problem of democratic responsibility. For freedom and responsibility are indivisible. In mass consciousness personal responsibility dissolves in the responsibility "of all" and freedom of choice goes through a tragic metamorphosis by becoming freedom from responsibility. The principle "the majority is always right" is a truism. In any case, majority rule, when combined with low political awareness and freedom from responsibility, never yields good fruit.

Documents, newsreels and press photos remind us of the lessons of history. A sea of roaring throats, the crowd in Nuremberg stadium welded together by an unprecedented exaltation. Another scene. This time the seething crowd is disciplined, and the mass of people, drawn up in impeccable formation, greets the Fuehrer. An odious example, no doubt. Yet it patently demonstrates one of the tragic variants of "majority rule," pseudodemocracy brought to the point of total destruction.

"Majority rule" begins to yield good fruit only in combination with honour, conscience and responsibility on the part of the individual, and in particular responsibility for the choice made.

"Rejoice, King of Judea!" - is a huge canvas. This unfinished work by Kramskoy was displayed recently at the Russian Museum for the first time in fifty years. The entire canvas exudes horror but the artist gave his picture a different title - "Laughter." There is no contradiction here because it is far from always that laughter brings joy, goodness and light. Kramskoy depicted the jeering crowd that gathered on that spring day near the palace of Pontius Pilate, the procurator of Judea. Jesus stands alone before this mocking and jeering crowd. They defer to him mockingly, offering him a crown of thorns. "Rejoice, King of Judea!" - the crowd screams, and its laughter conveys the chill of death. The Legionaries also laugh. One of them stands in the foreground. The painter depicted every detail of his expression of casual superiority, and his arrogant grin, while all around are peals of laughter from the rabble anticipating the excitement of an execution. We do not see the faces of the people who are performing their antics on the second tier of the courtyard and it seems to be a brown mass, monolithic in its hatred and laughter. But there is sorrow in the eyes of Christ.

What has all this got to do with democracy?

Democracy implies first of all choice. And perhaps in lesser measure the choice of a candidate for a post of authority. Choice of one's stand in life, one's personal responsibility for one's own destiny, for the destiny of other people, a responsibility that is not dissolved in that of "all the others." It also implies a sense of the planetary scale of the individual life - the "micro cosmos." Last but not least, it implies the idea of goodness, which today is realized as a vitally necessary moral and political imperative.

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Democracy includes not only the stated rights and freedoms of citizens. They are necessary but not sufficient for true power of the people. There exists an unobtrusive non-ostentatious kind of democracy which expresses itself in standards of behavior in daily life, in the ability to feel and carry out the rule Immanuel Kant called the categorical imperative: behave in such a way as you would want others to behave in respect of you. This rule is called the golden rule, because there is no other which so comprehensively presents the essence of democratic culture and fuses social affinity and the individual.

Without this "golden rule" established in the way of life of generations, democracy is very ephemeral and unstable and can easily degenerate into a rule of stupidity, tyranny and terror. I had to overcome serious misgivings before finally deciding to quote a letter sent to me care of New Times. Its author, a worker, fiercely upholds democracy, curses bureaucrats and demands the dismissal, imprisonment and execution... Such letters are a rarity, but how often champions of justice and democracy refuse to stop short of repression. And this one should know.

Glasnost and free expression of the will have placed before the people the need to master new lessons of democracy and move on from the arithmetic to the algebra of rule by the people. I refer to the drafting of norms of procedure and the development of the skills needed to correlate different interests and find civilized solutions to social conflicts. They exist in any society, including in the most democratic ones, and the main task is to find ways of resolving conflicts in an atmosphere of openness and undeviating observance of human rights. Based on the principle of non-violence, the new political thinking expresses the algebra of democracy. The lessons continue.

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IN THE PATH OF RUSSO-BALT

YURI SHEVCHENKO

The great Russian military commander Suvorov used to say: "Train hard, fight easy."

And what if you have to train and fight at the same time!

"Add to this open flanks," says Victor Bossert with a wry smile, "and the fact that, using military parlance, our command staff is grossly undermanned, and you will get some idea of the kind of battle we have on our hands."

Frankly, I expected him to sound different, triumphant. As I set out for the town of Jelgava near Riga, the Latvian capital, I had equipped myself with a set of statistics, showing that restructuring at the motor works is making good headway, that the plant has been meeting production deadlines for the first time in many years, and that labour productivity shot up by 30 per cent in six months (instead of the predicted four years). During the same period the plant manufactured 175 RAF minibuses over and above the planned target, with the state inspection checking for quality, and increased the utilization factor by 1.45. Under Bossert's leadership, the plant is at last showing a profit and has joined the Quality-90 programme. Last year it was undermanned, while today even inhabitants of Riga want to work at the RAF plant, not to speak of people who live in the nearby villages and homesteads: the plant provides transportation for workers, and has opened a large retail trade centre, a pharmacy, and a kindergarten. It is building a lot of housing, all in keeping with the promises made last February.

During a recent conference at the Party committee of the town of Jelgava, somebody told Bossert, half-joking, half-serious:

"Before we know it, other industries in the city will have come to a standstill because of you. Plant managers are complaining."

This referred to the fact that recently manpower has been drifting away from other industries to RAF.

"Tell those who are complaining that they should come up with a social programme for their workers that rivals ours. There are 7,000 people living in the immediate vicinity of the plant. I want to bring them back to the plant."

But it is not only welfare facilities and better housing that attract people. Pay at the plant ranges from 180 to 800 rubles a month (this applies both to workers and engineers). Yet even that is not the whole story.

Is a compromise needed!

Our readers may remember that in our issue No. 8 for 1987 we gave an account of how the new manager of the Latvian minibus factory was elected. The winner among many contenders from all parts of the Soviet Union was Victor Bossert, an energetic, 38-year-old engineer from Omsk, in Siberia. He became the first elected plant manager in the Soviet Union.

Now, over six months later, we went along to see how matters stand at RAF today.

But first, a few words about what the plant was like yesterday. Although it is well known in this country and abroad, its output of minibuses is not large, and their quality is no match for that of the minibuses produced by such famous firms as Renault and Volkswagen. Drastic changes were needed not only in technology, but in the moral and psychological climate as well. Only a revolutionary change could enable the factory to make a leap forward, to break into the world market with a top-class minibus, and expand production. As a first step towards that goal, it was decided to elect the manager democratically. Bossert won the election largely because he offered the most attractive programme for improving things at the factory.

Now the contest with its competing platforms, strategies, tactics, and personalities, the heated arguments in the factory's conference hall, and the whole exhilarating atmosphere of a democratic election are a thing of the past. There has

New Jelgava, a neighbourhood built by the plant.

begun a period of day-to-day work. As I have said, performance statistics are comforting and testify to marked improvements. But Bossert's melancholy smile was somewhat unsettling.

"Haven't you lost some of your enthusiasm over the last six months?"

"It's been a hard time. But I don't feel tired. I've become wiser, though."

"In what way?"

"Six months ago, when I was elected, there was a lot of fanfare and rhetoric over what was happening at the plant. The election was in effect a joint drafting of a blueprint for the factory's future development, and not just the election of a plant manager. It was hailed as a revolutionary event. Of course, it was revolutionary by the standards of the factory and even the whole town. Today the full meaning of what Lenin said on a far more important occasion has been brought home to me: no revolution is worth anything unless it can defend itself."

"I see that you are again using military language."

"Yes, I thought the main battle had been won, but now I feel it's only beginning. In pursuing perestroika, we have to grope our way, that is, if we do not want to make compromises with our own conscience and with circumstances. I have realized that compromise is a big threat to perestroika."

"Can you elaborate on that?"

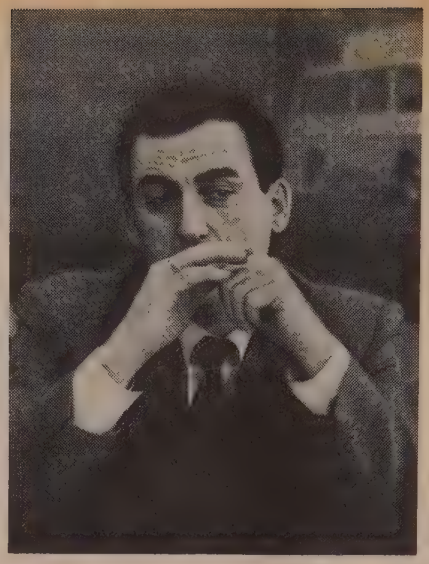
"Yes. I have no days off and I work from morning till night. I'm five people rolled into one: plant manager, chief engineer, deputy manager for production matters, deputy manager for quality, and deputy chief engineer for technical retooling. Mind you, I'm not giving you just the range of my duties, but posts that are vacant. These vacancies exist and I now have to fill them. There are many who would like to fill these vacancies and I'm being accosted by "old" members of staff, some of whom are not at all old. The local authorities are offering and sometimes pressing their own candidates on me. But I need people who think as I do, and not somebody's nominees. So, I am holding out and doing several jobs at once. Believe me, this has nothing to do with arrogance. I just haven't found people capable of measuring up to our future requirements.

"Are you sure you don't mean your own requirements, rather than those of the future?"

"Ideally, the manager's requirements should be the requirements of the future."

"How do you see the future, then?"

"To put it in a nutshell: we want our minibus to equal Renault and in time to surpass it, and to become a permanent earner of hard currency. This is the goal to which everything is geared: the building of the new workshops we have started, the new approach to efficiency and quality of work, the reappraisal of the workers' role



What's on the director's mind?

in that, more care for the worker, the reconstruction of existing production facilities and administrative services, and the introduction of a new ethic in industry. By ethic I mean that it is unethical to produce the kind of machines we are producing now."

"And yet you keep on producing them. Isn't that in itself a compromise?"

"You are taking me up on my own words. We hate making them, but have to go on making them. These are the hard facts. Our time has not come yet. The first batch of new minibuses will not be produced until 1993. In the meantime we are manufacturing the old model, 17,000 vehicles a year (I am trying to find out why the production target is 17,000 and not, say, 20,000 or 25,000. When the factory was built, the real demand was not taken into account, and we are now having to pay for it). The demand for our minibuses on the domestic market is at least three times as great. And then it is not profitable producing on such a small scale. Just increasing output is no answer because the minibus consumes 13 litres of fuel per 100 kilometres, while the world standard is 10 litres. In general, it is high time we switched to a diesel engine - at the moment we don't have one. Even so, the minibus we are producing today is not quite the same as the old one. We are gradually introducing a modernized 22038 model."

"What will your new basic model be and why do you plan to launch it in 1993?"

"The date has been scientifically fixed. It will take us six years to prepare the production capacity, develop new technologies, design the vehicle, and mould a qualitatively new work force. We are already working towards it. We have announced an all-Latvia competition for the best design of the future minibus. We have received 54 designs and the jury, which I head, has made a tentative selection."

"Do you mind if our magazine prints a picture of this model?"

"I'll think about it. Let me have your address."

Decisions, decisions

Telephone rang. It was the ministry calling. Bossert excused himself and his secretary made a gesture to indicate that it would be a long conversation.

So I went down to the assembly floor. Familiarization with the factory and the way the administration and its departments operate lasted several hours. It was during that time that I was finally able to understand why the plant's manager felt that "compromise" was the main obstacle in the way of reform.

Having elected their manager, the employees have committed themselves to making new decisions and choices every day. They have to choose between the habits and attitudes of yesterday and those of today. These choices are dictated by the manager (they had elected an exacting, determined man of principle) and by the whole atmosphere of broader democracy at the factory (which had made Bossert's election possible in the first place).

Let me illustrate. After Bossert's election worker participation increased dramatically. Workers have been proposing more and more improvements. Each proposal had to be considered promptly and a decision had to be made quickly. Formerly, such proposals gathered dust for years. In the new setup, the factory's many services and experts have an increased load. Some feel it to be an additional load. This is not true, as they were supposed to do this work before, only they managed to avoid doing it with comparative impunity. They had to choose between a tougher work schedule, or the old leisurely pace. These are not always easy choices.

Here is another example. Grigory Malkin had for many years headed the management efficiency department. He was a popular figure at the plant. The department's job was to keep production statistics and to optimize management. When the plant switched to cost-accounting, it immediately became apparent that the department was to blame for many past woes. It had been neglecting its duties and had contributed little to production.

Two options were open: to embark on a drastic and difficult restructuring of the department under a new head, or to keep the sympathetic, easy-going Malkin, with whom everybody had felt so comfortable over the years. After a conference that lasted far into the night the workers voted to appoint a new head of the department, Gunvaldis Dzintars.

Anatoly Vakhrushev, deputy director for commercial operations, was a more difficult case. He had the reputation of

a scrupulous and strict administrator. In Bossesrt's opinion, the factory needed a flexible, commercially astute man capable of promoting the factory's wares, coming into contact with customers from different cities in the country, organizing sales, studying the market, and raising funds. Vakhrushev was offered a different and less taxing job. He objected and put up a fight. He brought in some of his old colleagues who argued that the fact that he had no commercial acumen was no justification for demoting him. This view was shared by some at the Jelgava Party committee. Bossert was "hauled over the carpet" and summoned to various arbitration commissions. The manager had to spend precious working hours, even days, presenting his case and offering explanations that nobody needed. Sometimes he asked himself whether it would not be better to let Vakhrushev keep his job and thus save everyone a lot of trouble. The argument was to be resolved in the office of the deputy minister of the republic.

The situation is complex bacause not everyone around Bossert shares his views. A manager elected in the era of democratization and glasnost, he has to work side by side with some people who think along different lines. This is inevitable and it is this that makes the danger of compromise so real. Herein lies the complexity and drama of the current reform.

I, for one, find Bossert's character after my heart. At the final meeting with the minister, he stood his ground and in the process made himself a permanent enemy in the person of his former deputy.

The paradox of the open door

Over the last six months the employees have realized how approachable the new manager is: the door of his office is open to anyone, and there are no special reception hours. This innovation is in the spirit of the times and reflects the powerful "bottom to top" movement: having elected their manager, people felt they could treat him as an equal. Bossert did not object.

Only, as it turned out, it was not easy to be his equal.

Once a deputation of women from the mechanical workshop came to him to complain that it was difficult to drill holes in a certain component by hand. After hearing them out, Victor Bossert took a clean sheet of paper and started to make some calculations. The women workers gazed in bewilderment at the columns of figures appearing on the sheet. When he had finished, Bossert took the sheet of paper and said: "Let's go down to the floor."

During a lunch break in the mechanical workshop, the manager called together the workers of the minor drilling department and suggested that they themselves designed a new automatic drill.

"The fact of the matter is that a plant manager is not omnipotent. I can't just ring up Moscow or some other city and order such a drill. Getting new technology is still a cumbersome procedure, involving a lot of correspondence, and clearance from government ministries before we are put on the waiting list. And anyway, I can't afford such a machine. Why not build it ourselves? I have made some calculations," Bossert produced the sheet of paper with columns of figures, "and the saving that would accrue, given the present volume of output, enables me to offer 600 rubles for a simple automatic drill. Would anyone volunteer to make such a drill?"

For a week the workers in the mechanical workshop mulled over the manager's proposal. Three amateur designers offered a solution, which was adopted after careful scrutiny by the manager and a special commission.

On the face of it, the petition to the manager from the mechanical workshop had done the trick. It was only later that it dawned on people that they had done everything themselves and Bossert had only suggested an idea. They could have hit on the idea themselves. "That's the whole point," says the manager.

He has received many complaints about bottlenecks and flaws in various sections of his plant. Bossert has made it a rule that the people who complain suggest a solution. The pros and cons of the proposals are carefully weighed - the manager can be relied on to do that - and the author of the proposal is rewarded. Within the six months of Bossert's administration, the average wages of workers had risen by 20 per cent, mainly due to the use of untapped production potential and a corresponding increase in labour productivity.

The "open door" policy has had other, more striking, consequences. Once engineer Eriks Vilciens complained about what he thought was a mess in the assembly workshop. Victor Bossert listened to him, agreed with many of his criticisms and, as a parting shot, asked him how to rectify all these errors and what the head of the assembly shop should do.

"I don't think he should do anything," Eriks shrugged.

"Why?"

"He isn't in control. And any measures he took would be half-measures."

"Can you name anyone who could handle the assembly shop properly?"

"Myself."

A few weeks later, Eriks Vilciens was presenting his programme for modernizing the workshop and trying to convince the workers (he had already convinced the plant manager) that his proposals made sense. He was elected head of the workshop by a majority. A minority voted against as they felt it was lacking in modesty to offer oneself for the job as he had done.

I started by saying that what attracts people to the RAF plant is not only the range of social services and the higher

NEW TIMES - 88

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wages but some other and more important attractions. For the mass of the workers and engineers it is the opportunity to make decisions, to prove themselves, and help run the enterprise, provided, of course, that they genuinely want to do so.

It took people some time to realize that the open door of the director's office could be a trap.

Once a production engineer came to the manager to ask his permission to move a lathe to a different place. Much to the man's surprise, Bossert did not give a permission, but said he would like to go and see the machine. When they came to the factory floor, he told the engineer that he should have resolved this minor issue himself without distracting the manager. Moreover, shifting the machine tool was one of his duties. But as he had neglected them, thus causing damage to production, he would be officially reprimanded.

Another "victim" was one of Bossert's deputies who, misled by his accessibility, decided to shift some of his problems onto the manager. Today, employees think twice before going to the manager.

Does that mean that things are becoming less democratic? Far from it. Democracy is gaining in scope. Open Letter Days are now regularly held in the factory's conference hall. Anyone who wishes can put forward suggestions on all matters pertaining to production and welfare. This makes the whole procedure more orderly and also saves time as workers don't have to keep going to the director's office. Moreover, the conference of the working collective is the main boss at the factory. The Open Letter Days are in fact such conferences.

At a recent such conference it was decided that all the employees now on the waiting list to be rehoused (they number 800) should be given new flats by 1994. Some of the speakers criticized the builders for being too slow, especially this year. And judging from their plans, next year will not be much better.

Bossert took the floor and said: "We can speed up housing construction. It's within our power. Let us put our heads together and think how. To build faster we need money, new investments. Where are we to get them? The only way is to increase output over and above the planned target, to produce, say, 1,000 extra buses before the end of the year. The proceeds will be earmarked for house-building and something will be left to buy new technology. There is no other way. Consider my suggestion carefully, but let me tell you that I have proceeded from a realistic basis, and I haven't named that figure at random. It would probably mean some overtime work and new reserves will have to be committed. It's up to you to decide whether it's a realistic proposition."

For the next half hour, the conference hall was like a beehive.

Finally, 93 per cent of those present voted to raise the planned production target.

State quality inspection is a serious matter

In the assembly shop, in the place where brand-new RAFs, their tanks already filled with fuel, roll off the conveyer belt, I was attracted by a fenced-off section where the state quality inspection was working.

Several silent young men in overalls were examining a white bus with an ambulance sign (most of the minibuses are used in the health service and as taxis). They revved up the engine, opened the bonnet, tinkered with the engine, and took measurements on a test stand. I noticed that the assembly workers treated these silent men rather coolly. I asked Bossert about it.

"Let's face it. There's no love lost between our workers and the state quality inspection. Your mind understands that the inspection is necessary in the national interest, but there is a more immediate consideration: we can't help feeling that the inspection could deprive us of a bonus and cut our wages. I told you at the start of our talk that we are trying to bring about a change in workers' attitudes. But an additional quality control body causes a painful reaction. The reaction of course depends on their level of consciousness."

"What is your own attitude to state quality inspection?"

"It is a serious measure. There is no doubt that it is necessary even in such a relatively well-run enterprise as ours. The state has paid dearly and is still paying for the uncompetitiveness of our products some of which are so inferior in quality that they fail to find a buyer. State quality inspection is an energetic measure meant to yield a quick result. But it is still a temporary measure. The main thing is **to raise the standards of performance and to inculcate the desire to work better,** to create conditions for conscientious work, introduce new up-to-date technologies and keep abreast of scientific and technological progress. Only this multi-pronged attack can solve the problem of quality. State quality inspection is only a partial answer, and there is some room for improvement in the way it works."

"Do you mean that their work is not impeccable?"

"Let's take our plant. Who are the people in the state quality inspection? We see that they are our former employees. Those who for some reason have quit their jobs to work for the State Committee on Standards (Gosstandart), under which the state quality inspection operates. This trifling circumstance can create problems. The level of skills of the state inspectors is often lower than that of our own employees. Of course, it should be at least as high and preferably higher."

"But surely this can't be the case everywhere?"

"You are probably right, but I can only speak of my own factory, although I must say that I have observed a similar situation in other enterprises. The state quality inspection should be manned by engineers and technologists, and this is not the case. As it is, it employs people of various occupations and of varying levels of competence. Many of them don't even have a driving licence. As a result, the controllers detect scratches and minor warps in the body while ignoring basic performance as regards fuel and oil consumption, and deviations from design requirements."

"Have you been to the Renault plant, whose quality standards you are so bravely determined to surpass?"

"I haven't been to a Renault plant, but I've been at other capitalist motor plants. I was impressed by the intensity, quality and efficiency of their work. But they have their own incentives, and we have ours. Our workers are the real masters of their plant. I think I should stress this today, in the year of the 70th anniversary of the October Revolution. We are the masters, and threfore our prospects are better. We are the masters of our assembly-line, of the green houses where we grow our own vegetables, of our own residential quarters, a pioneer camp on the Black Sea coast and a sanatorium. This is why I sound so confident."

Bossert has not sent us a picture of the future minibus to be published in our magazine. At first I was sorry, but then I thought it was just the sensible precaution of a businessman. In the past we have often been premature in heralding future triumphs.

So I'll use the space intended for the picture of the new vehicle to give you an account of my final talk with Bossert. One phrase in our conversation put me on my guard. He said that the factory had yet to scale its Vesuvius. High-sounding words always sound strange coming from a businessmen. Perhaps "Vesuvius" is part of a proverb unknown to me?

"I don't know of any such proverb," said Bossert.

And then, he told me a short story. Perhaps not everyone knows (I didn't) that Riga was the birthplace of the motor industry in this country. It was from here that the first commercially produced car, the Russo-Balt, started its journey on the roads of Russia in 1909. Before long it was appreciated abroad. The Russo-Balt clocked up thousands of kilometres along the roads of Europe and Africa, and during one of its trials it amazed the world by driving to the top of Mount Vesuvius.

■

Soviet ambassador

ZOYA NOVOZHILOVA, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the U.S.S.R. to the Swiss Confederation, answers questions put by New Times.

What did you do during the first days!

The first days were taken up with courtesy calls on Swiss leaders, members of the government and various departments. That is probably the first job of any newly appointed ambassador. During these visits exchanges of views took place on possible directions in which relations between our two countries could be developed, and the questions the resolution of which is priority were pinpointed.

One could describe relations between our country and Switzerland as having a long tradition....

Yes. Suvorov's soldiers helped Switzerland defend her independence. And Russia preserves the memory of General Jomini and of Peter the Great's Admiral Leforte. Trade with Switzerland was instrumental in promoting the breeding of merino sheep in the Crimea. And Moldavian orchards are indebted greatly for their fame to fruit growers from Vaud. Or consider the fact that after the October Revolution Geneva industrialists supplied equipment for the Pulkovo Observatory in Leningrad. Since then trade relations between our two countries have been constantly developing.

Clearly today, when perestroika is under way in the Soviet Union, new prospects have opened up for such ties!

Certainly. And considerable ones at that. Although, of course, there are problems too. I intend to discuss all that during my meetings with representatives of Swiss business circles. We could cooperate in many fields. Take for example our ties with the major pharmaceutical company Sandoz. The foundations are being laid for the first Soviet-Swiss joint venture for the production of fertilizer in the Soviet Union. The possibilities of the Soviet market are, of course, much broader.

What have you managed to see in Switzerland so far!

I have already visited a number of cities and shall of course form a closer acquaintance with this lovely country and its people, who cherish their customs and traditions so carefully. The Days of the Soviet Union held in Switzerland in the towns of Nyon, Berne, Basel, Zurich, Lausanne and Lugano, which, like the Days of Switzerland that have been held in the Soviet Union since the mid-1970s, provide concrete examples of the mutual enrichment of each other's cultures and the deepening of relations between our states and peoples. The first issue of the weekly l'Illustré devoted completely to the Soviet Union has come out. Swiss TV has prepared several programmes about the life of the Soviet people, new phenomena in Soviet society, and the development of glasnost and perestroika. There is growing interest in the Soviet Union in Switzerland. And if peoples of different countries come to understand one another better, get to know each other's difficulties and day-to-day problems, they will find it easier to work together against mistrust and suspicion, and to seek mutually acceptable solutions to complex international problems. That is the essence of the new political thinking. The creation of an effective mechanism for a universal system of international security, which the Soviet Union has urged, should become the basis for international relations at the end of the 20th century. The concrete proposals for a nuclear-free world, the disarmament measures and joint cooperation for the sake of resolving the problems and tasks affecting the whole of humanity - surely all that makes for greater optimism. The Soviet-American agreement in principle on medium- and shorter-range missiles gives new hope. I should like to believe that these are only the first steps towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The United States is also represented in Berne by a woman....

I regard the growing participation of women in diplomatic work as a sort of sign of the times, of the new phenomena in international life. I believe that women, as the traditional keepers of the family home, have a better understanding of, and take closer to heart the search for peace and friendly relations between peoples. Alexandra Kollontai, who devoted many years of her life to diplomatic work, remains my ideal, as does that outstanding figure of our time, Indira Gandhi. Their example helps me in my work.

Please accept my thanks and best wishes in your work.

VLADIMIR KUZNETSOV

Geneva

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THUNDERSTORMS AMID ETERNAL SPRING

PAVEL BOGOMOLOV

Having opened the wicket, Gabriel Bracho held his huge dog back by the woolly scruff of its neck lest it scare the guests away from his hospitable home. The small mansion to which Venezuela's most celebrated artist welcomed us also served as his studio.

A husky man with an unruly shock of wavy grey hair, bushy eyebrows and a humorous twinkle in his intent eyes, Bracho turned out to be a keen and mischievous debater - not the kind who does all the talking, but who challenges you to a heated polemic. With a few apt remarks he reconstructed the whole gamut of contradictory public sentiments current in Venezuela in the remote days of Stalingrad. These remarks shed new light on the background of his famous canvasses devoted to the epic battle on the Volga.

The painter told us he was now seriously concerned about the virtually uncontrolled urbanization of Caracas, which is turning it into an architecturally cosmopolitan megalopolis largely devoid of Latin American colour.

"Back in my art school years, in the thirties, our capital was a garden city," Bracho reminisced nostalgically. "On our way to friends' homes we used to walk through fruit plantations, and our avenidas, then serene and majestic, were lined with citrus trees. Caracas is situated in the mountains, where it is cool most of the time, which explains why our capital has long been known as a city of eternal spring.... And what do we see now whichever way we look? Glass and concrete skyscrapers which might just as well be in Tokyo. The yellowish air turbid with exhaust fumes, standard signboards advertizing McDonald's restaurants, and intricate stone mazes of shopping centres. Even the poor districts look alien, with their house walls pasted over with foreign ad posters, and their factories and workshops busy assemblying American machinery instead of making products of our own. Indeed, we are losing our national identity...."

That was an elder citizen's view of things. As for newcomers, this city with a population of over three million strikes them as dynamic and eager to keep abreast of the times.

Caracas is a "layer-cake" city, as it were. Its avenues are spanned by fanciful bridges and flyovers. If you lift your gaze, you'll see the huge bulks of the skyscrapers. And higher still lies another "avenida," a celestial one, busy with airliners and privately-owned Cessnas on their way to and from Carlota Airport, situated in the city centre. The city is surrounded by mountains. The entire cityscape bristles with the silvery needles of radio and TV relay station aerials.

The black gold of the Maracaibo

Most of the cars that crowd the streets are big American limousines. Japanese compacts are not popular here. People in Caracas have got used to their hire-purchased "behemoths" and no wonder considering that many U.S. car companies like Ford, Chrysler and others have long expanded into the Venezuelan market.... The fact that an 8-cylinder Ford engine is voracious does not worry anyone because petrol, of all things, is cheap there.

Retail prices of fuel are indeed fairly low in Venezuela, with its fabulous petroleum resources which experts put at about 55 billion barrels as of this year. This far exceeds the estimates made at the beginning of this century although, as early as that, asphalt obtained from Venezuelan oil was used to pave the streets of New York and is certainly way beyond what the Spanish conquistadors might have imagined as they shipped the first barrelful of black gold to Madrid in 1539. If extraction proceeds at its present rate, Venezuela's oil resources will probably last for another century. Most of them are concentrated near the Maracaibo, the lake after which the fast-growing city on the Caribbean shore is named. That part of the country now produces about 200,000 tons of petroleum a day, or four fifths of Venezuela's total petroleum output. The Maracaibo.... Few avid young readers of the famous "Captain Blood's Odyssey" have not dreamed of seeing that lake linked with the sea by a narrow strait. As my plane approached the "pirate coast," I clung to the porthole trying to make out the ruins of ancient forts. There were none. Maracaibo's sights today, Augusto Figueroa, a Venezuelan journalist and my travelling companion, explained, are open-worked oil derricks, offshore pumping units, oil tanks and compressor stations.... These constitute parts of a wasteless and almost hermetically sealed oil extraction and transportation processes. As a result, the lake is distinguished by an enviable purity. Just think of it: commercial fishing is gaining in scale there from year to year!

The Indian settlements on piles which the Spaniards saw on Lake Maracaibo reminded them of Venice, and they named the country Venezuela. If that is really so, then the motorboats scurrying about the off-shore oilfields can be likened to gondolas.

The first highly productive oil well was sunk near the lake in 1914. Somewhat later the American Standard Oil company fastened onto the Maracaibo. Although other foreign companies also got concessions there, the Americans prevailed. They established the big Creole Petroleum Corporation in the region.

It took Venezuela a long time to recover national sovereignty over its natural wealth. The struggle involved various political forces and public circles in the country. Finally - on January 1, 1976 - the oil industry nationalization law came into force; it made oil production, processing and export an exclusive right of the state.

Though limited in scope, the social development programmes carried out within the framework of state capitalism are certainly worthy of note. The Lagoven

Caracas is going glass-and-concrete.
Photo from National Geographic magazine (U.S.A.)

company, the biggest of Venezuela's four oil industry amalgamations, acquainted me with them.

The incidence of industrial injuries in the Maracaibo oilfields has fallen by three quarters over the past seven years and comes to 17 per million working hours. Lagoven meets about 60 per cent of medical expenses, sells some prime necessities at cut prices, and helps workers build homes. Lagoven even runs a savings bank of its own which encourages oil workers to deposit ten per cent of their wages by paying them higher interest than usual.

These and some other advantages seem to suggest that Maracaibo is quite a prosperous part of the country. Recently, however, a mighty wave of political manifestations protesting against the social policy of the authorities swept the region. The demonstrations were provoked by a common anxiety of most Venezuelans - a new and dramatic rise in the cost of living. Venezuelans' real incomes have on average dropped by more than half since 1979. Almost a quarter of the able-bodied population has no regular income. Seventy per cent of the population are displeased with the current economic policy. They say in the open that their living standard has gone down and that still harder times are ahead.

Problems

"As Latin American countries go, we are not too badly off," Alonso Ojeda, General Secretary of the Communist Party of Venezuela, told me. "It is no accident that in the streets of our capital police shoo away homeless immigrants from Colombia and other Latin American countries trying to make their living by peddling cheap odds and ends. These wretched people regard Caracas as all but their only refuge from hunger and despair. However, had our country taken a different course - that of planned, controlled and stable development - it would have done much better."

Incidentally, no one in Caracas denies the fact that the socio-economic situation in today's Venezuela is extremely complex, even explosive in many respects. What Venezuelans are divided on are the causes of the crisis and ways of ending it.

Until fairly recently local publications and political discussions were imbued with optimism. There was much talk about the "privileged" position of Venezuela, and its allegiance to bourgeois democracy undaunted by the establishment of dictatorial regimes in other countries of the region. Admittedly, the voice of Venezuela carries increasing weight at major international forums. Gone are the times when important political decisions were all but dictated to Caracas from the north, Venezuela has taken a constructive stand on many acute issues; it seeks a peaceful settlement in Cental America and is opposed to the militarization of space.

"That's true," Cesar Olarte, General Secretary of the Confederation of Workers of Venezuela, told me. "But even the smoothly running parliamentary machine, active participation in the Contadora group and close involvement in the life of the continent as a whole cannot conceal the serious ills of our society. Take the uncontrolled capital outflow from the country, for instance. Today the Venezuelan bourgeoisie's deposits in Western banks equal the sum of our foreign debt, which runs to 35 billion. This shatters the myth of all being equally hard hit by the crisis. I am not a Marxist, and I am not calling for a revolution, but I am convinced that a mere facelift is unlikely to get us anywhere. What is needed are radical measures - redistributing national income, giving more aid to the poor, raising the population's purchasing power, making our economy truly diversified, and creating new industries, promoting trade and economic links with the socialist countries."

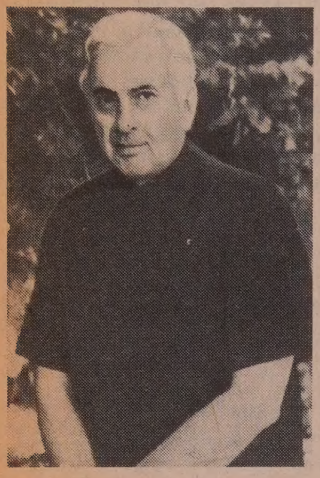
Cesar Olarte is a prominent figure in the ruling party of Democratic Action (AD) which is affiliated to the Socialist International. Naturally enough, his conclusions are largely determined by party discipline and subordination. But Olarte's view of the domestic situation differs somewhat from that taken by the AD leadership. In the opinion of party bosses and many ministers, almost all the problems Venezuela is now beset with are due to external factors and especially the long-term reduction in oil prices. The COPEI Social Christian Party, the mainstay of the opposition, disagrees; the root of the evil, it claims, lies in the fallacious policy pursued by the government itself.

True, a slight recent rise in world liquid fuel prices has caused both the cabinet and the opposition to make certain adjustments in their policies. But will the respite and the favourable foreign market situation last long enough? While no ready and prompt answer to this question is forthcoming, the country's urgent problems - including that of preparations for the next elections scheduled for 1988 - are already demanding close attention. Venezuelans dislike vagueness, and one can understand them. They want changes for the better.

Caracas-Moscow

"THE EMPIRE IS LITERALLY BANKRUPT"

The American writer Gore Vidal replies to the questions put by New Times.



Mr Vidal, our readers would like to know from you as an author of historical novels: does history help understand the present?

Without a knowledge of the history of one's own country it is not possible to be a useful citizen. Without a knowledge of the history of other societies it is not possible to conduct, let us say, an intelligent foreign policy. I also favour accurate history. Of course, nothing is ever truly accurate, but one ought, to the best of one's ability, reconstruct the past as it was, no matter how embarrassing, in order to make sense of the present.

In your novels "Burr," "1876" and "Lincoln" you portray the 19th century history of the United States. Do you feel U.S. policy towards the outside world has changed since then, or has it not?

The only time that the U.S. has had a coherent foreign policy was from 1896 to about 1908. That policy was expansionist and imperial. Influenced by Captain Mahan and his book, "The Influence of Sea Power upon History," Theodore Roosevelt and his friends set about arranging a war with Spain in order to detach its colonial possessions and add them to our own. This gave us the Philippines and set our empire firmly in the Pacific Ocean, with a longing for mainland Asia, where Russia and Japan were already in contest for parts of disintegrating China.

Incidentally, as early as 1900 Brooks Adams was predicting that Russia itself would either collapse or undergo a revolution which might make it more than ever powerful on the world scene. If Russia did not recover from the revolution, he said, we should be ready to acquire China's Shansi province and Siberia. Since then we have tended not to act but to react.

Vietnam was an atavistic impulse to gain a purchase on the Asiatic mainland (fulfilling the dreams of Mahan, Roosevelt, Adamc, et al). But as none of our leaders knew any history and as we are, thank God, more interested in consumer goods than in foreign real estate, the long sad war came to nothing. I discuss all this in my new novel "Empire."

Can fiction, political literature or art influence politics in any way?

More in your country where literature and intellect are held in higher esteem, and less in the United States where ignorance is indeed bliss and the public education system has been allowed to collapse while all our revenues go to weaponry.

The intellectual American presence in our life ended in 1920, when Woodrow Wilson (a first-rate mind) was succeeded by Harding. Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson were the last presidents who could and did write their own speeches - books, too. Their successors have been varied in character and wisdom, but none has been an intellectual. Viewing TV has replaced reading in the U.S. The same will happen in the Soviet Union when electronic alternatives become available.

How do you see the future of the world in the light of current international events?

The United States is literally bankrupt. Therefore, the American empire will be shut down while we repair ourselves internally. Fortunately, the country's natural wealth and the ingenuity of our people ought to make us, fairly soon, able to compete with the new industrial lords of the earth - Japan and its Pacific-rim neighbours. Gorbachev seems to be trying to mobilize the resources in his own country. You are fortunate to have a youthful pragmatic leader who senses this need. As for us, we are still stuck in the old "the commies are coming" era. But that is wearing thin.

Drawing by N. Shcherbakov

Do you think the Soviet peace initiatives can impel the U.S. administration to alter its stand on issues of war and peace?

Certainly, the Soviet Union has lately put our rulers at a disadvantage. For forty years we have had no national goal save a negative: destroy communism. Gorbachev has pretty much rid us of that, except for some of our more ignorant fundamentalists and altogether too clever Israel firsters. But they are minor nuisances. I see both the Soviet Union and the United States turning inward, towards the bettering of their own societies.

Does any state have a moral right to impose its way of life on other nations?

Morality has never played a part in world politics, pace Woodrow Wilson. There are only national interests. Once upon a time these meant control by force, say, over Poland (and for centuries off and on), or over Latin America for us.

This is no longer practical or useful. The United States and the Soviet Union, despite nuclear weaponry, are both too small in a world of five billion people to make much difference.

The two great powers of the Northern Hemisphere, the United States and the Soviet Union, will form an alliance. For what purpose? The answer is obvious if one looks, at least, at the endless stream of Japanese-made cars in the streets. When that happens, perhaps our incompetence will be reduced and, jointly, we might even be able to build an automobile that someone would like to buy.

Interviewer MIKHAIL BROOK

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Tashkent — May 19-26

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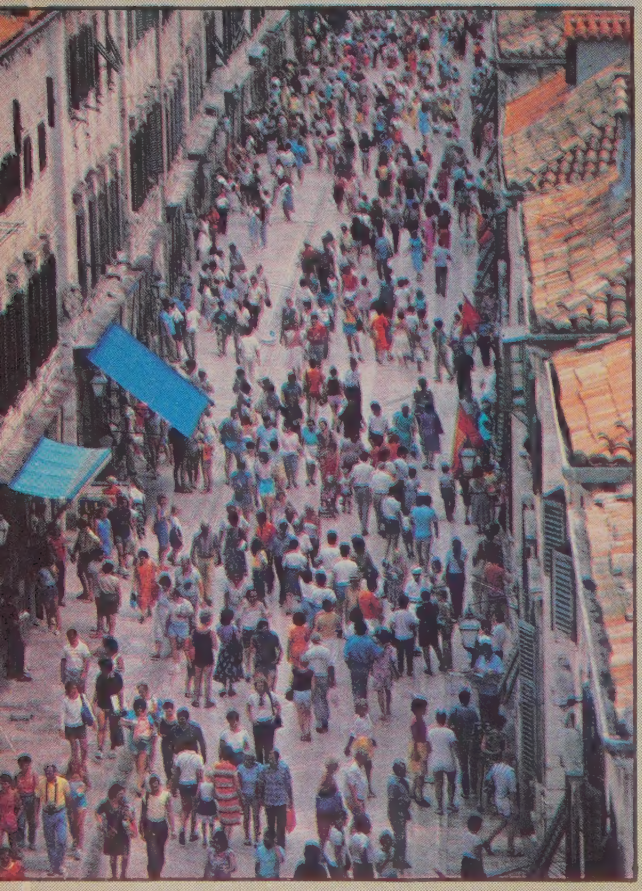
Morning in the city.

On the river.



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